







*Georgii A. Fothergill*





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THOUGHTS IN  
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mark designed by me - a cornucopia with W.H.W.











AN ARTIST'S THOUGHTS  
IN VERSE & DESIGN



PRINTED FOR THE AUTHOR & DESIGNER

GEORGE A. FOTHERGILL

M.B., C.M., R.A.M.C.

BY T. & A. CONSTABLE, EDINBURGH: 1919



## The Spell of Lorenzo

(Beauty in a boy must spell strength, as well as loveliness, or it is not true beauty.)


No bow had a curve so graceful  
As the lip of that lovely boy;  
No head crowned with curls so shapely -  
Not even the fairest of Troy -  
As the head of that beautiful boy.

It was limned\* from the cast of Lorenzo  
(and by one who was only a boy)  
With the care and the skill of a master,  
To be more than an artist's toy -  
more than a passing joy.

I look at him every morning,  
I see him when going to bed,  
And I linger sometimes before him  
To feast on his lovely head;  
May he live on the wall when I'm dead, -

And perhaps he will be to the children  
The charm, the solace, the joy  
He has been to their father, and teach them  
What sorrow can never destroy -  
The spell of that beautiful boy.

12.9.20

 Alfred Gill

\* A large stump drawing done by me in the  
Easter term <sup>of 1885</sup> at Uppingham, and which, with  
other works from the antique, obtained for  
me the 1st prize open to the whole school -  
for four years running I was 1st prizeman there,  
1884-87.



TO MY WIFE AND CHILDREN











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Get yz gone! my innermost thoughts - get yz hence!  
May yz pick up the thoughts of the people  
As I hope to pick up their price.

~~CAF~~

- to me -  
Sweet record (~~to me~~) of sunshine and shadow -  
The best and the worst of <sup>my</sup> times;  
Dearly bought too with oceans of sorrow the pleasure  
Vibrating in most of this rhyme.

27.10.12 ~~CAF~~

I almost shun the exposure of this rhyme,  
So interwoven with my private life  
Is it, that scarce a verse belumps what  
Was not of me or mine - what <sup>a guidewife</sup> ~~my guide wife~~  
And ~~quiver~~ quiver-full of baits put in my head -  
A something done, or but a few words said,  
To mind me how we passed our share of time.

17.7.15 ~~CAF~~



## Of George Herbert (b. 1593)

I love George Herbert more than I can tell.  
The quaint conceits of all his poetry  
(How oddly does he mix up Heaven and Hell!)  
Are coupled with a fine felicity.

Archaic though he be (some love old things)  
And out of date as you are sure to say,  
This bard has written well; and when he sings,  
The Elizabethan sun glints in his way.

So Herbert lives beside me; he shall sing  
me to my grave with old harmonies, and  
much comfort to my soul I know 'he'll bring  
Before I get me to another land.

I linger with old Herbert as with none  
Of those that thymed in wisdom in the days  
When laurels were so plentifully won —  
He gives me tamer joys than Shakespeare's plays;

I read his lyrics as I read no others;  
For in his chiefest (these I often read)  
True restfulness I find, the best of brothers,  
A gentle man — a poet here indeed!

18. 2. 21  
Old Farmhouse  
Ramond Bridge  
Lindlithgowshire.

— W. G. S. Gill —

Published in  
The Scottish Chronicle

3 Nov. 1922

With the poems by me, and so  
by the way, to be published  
from this month onwards — about 23 of them.

Re last line of poem on  
opposite page. — Not until  
24 Oct. 1928 had I read John  
Barrow's "Freedom" —  
"A! Freedom is a noble thing!  
Freedom all salute to man gifts,  
He lives at ease that free lives."  
I had purchased W. G. S. Gill's  
Autobiography on that day and gave  
it to me. 1. 1. 1. 1. 1.





## ON LAMBOURNE DOWNS



H, these lovely days of  
leisure,

Free from worry, full of  
pleasure !

In my hand a sketching  
block,

In my sight a southern  
flock,

Overhead the bluest sky,  
Underneath, whereon I  
lie,

Saw-wort, scabious,  
creeping harrow,

Mouse-ear'd hawks-  
weed, clustering yarrow ;

In my ears (to increase  
the spell)

Comes the sound of  
tinkling bell,

Hung upon the foremost wether,  
Keeping all the rest together ;  
Not a single house in sight  
Save the shelter on my right  
Where I've chain'd the willing  
horse,

After flying up the course  
Of the classic Lambourne Downs,  
Far away from crowded towns.

Oh, the feeling of that ride,  
20.8.13

A

Increasing pace at every stride !  
None to challenge, none to beat—  
Just the gallop—there's the treat !

Let the jockey win his races,  
Whether flat or steeplechases ,  
Mounted on the cleverest horses,  
Over all the best of courses,  
So may I have one to own  
For a gallop here alone :  
And with soul and flesh at peace  
I would ever sketch at ease.



## 'ARS EST CELARE ARTEM'



GIVE me natural grace in a country  
maid !

Give me ripples of light in the wave-  
like braid,  
And in clustering curls the relief of  
shade.

Away with the show-rose !—away with  
display !

Let shadow and sunshine come as it  
may,  
But bring me the maid of my rounde-  
lay !

20.6.11

## VERSES FOR MY OWN BOOK-PLATE



DEAD leaves of a day long dead !—  
The day of my heart's desire,  
When into my yard was led  
A horse with a title, 'The Squire.'

But the dead with the living shall  
live

In the covers for prose and the  
lyre—

The best that the best authors give  
With the best of my hunters, 'The  
Squire.'

1915



# The Magpie and the Stillton

'I bear a pie picking at a piser,  
Who so picks at her, I shall pick at his nose,  
In faith.'

- II. A chattering magpie on a stillton —  
Or shell of a stillton chesse  
With a narrow, rugg'd rim to tilt on —  
Is a sight one rarely sees!
- III. Bird of ill omen (when thou'rt single) \* "One for sorrow."  
'Tis said ~~indeed~~ <sup>indeed</sup> thou art — ~~not~~  
False words! — Though in my speech may mingle,  
They ~~the~~ ne'er disturb my heart:
- IV. To see so fine a magpie tilt on  
That rim and poke his bill  
Down deep into a Gibson's \* stillton  
Is worth the risk of ill!
- I. Have a care! my lad, — move not or speak, —  
Ye'll drive him clean away —  
I've hear, ~~my~~ lad, what I say?  
Let's see him stoop and dip his beak  
Into the moulded stillton.
- V. Come, ill foreboding! Come, black sorrow!  
I'd rather the ill luck —  
I'd rather run ~~amuck~~ <sup>amuck</sup> amuck  
And breast the trial on the morrow,  
Than drive him from yon stillton!

1-2-10

Craigville

Blackhall

\* Gibson's famous grocery stores, Princess Street,  
Glasgow.



Not yet Swentien

To Our eldest girl

X

E'en though your hair may look so well,  
Wait yet awhile, my Isabel:  
Keep down your locks as long 's ye may,  
"For Oh! it is not always May"!

Unfold your hair, since so we durst  
Not love to see it till we must —  
O! do it in the childish way,  
As most of all we love your May.

6.3.10

— Mrs Bittell's Stivance

Am I to sweat by washing-tub  
That you may bask in bliss —  
Can I stand slaving here and hear  
You take another's Kiss? —

You knave, you traitor, friend and fool  
Who'd make me slave for you;  
And all the while you think your wife  
Knows not what others do?

Is that what's come of vows you made  
To me in days gone by?  
If such it be, no longer will  
I live your wife — not I!

July 1915

X

Instead of this quotation from  
Longfellow I would rather put —

For O! too soon will come that day!

26.8.22



## TO THE LYRIST OF THE SKIES

*'Make me thy lyre, even as the forest is'*



MIGHTY forest with its widespread wings  
Is as a lyre, and the winds that fall  
The lyrist: softly now they touch some  
strings,  
Now fiercely fling their force upon them all.  
The audience—the beasts of prey and all  
the birds—  
Marks well the meaning of the lyrist's  
words.

I, unawaken'd man, heed not thy strains—  
I linger at my brush and trust to Fate,

Scorning the weatherwise; and for my pains  
Am soon outstripp'd, regretting when too late.  
Teach me to time, like them, thy changing harmony—  
Grant me their wisdom, lyrist of the sky!

6.3.16

## TO THE HONEYSUCKLE



SWEET Honeysuckle, loveliest flower  
That twines around yon ancient tower,  
Charmer of tongue and eye,  
Thou art assuredly  
The Queen of insects' richest dower!

Bee after bee doth quickly follow  
Adown thy trumpet-shaped corolla  
Where sweetest nectar lies,  
And with proboscis tries  
To drain complete each fragrant hollow.



Youth only kens thee as a blessing—  
 Snake though thou be in nature, pressing  
     With too close kiss each bough ;  
     But, born to deck the brow,  
 Thy grace outweighs thy cruel caressing :

Child after child, her school-song ringing  
 From wall to wall where thou art clinging,  
     Doth pull thee down to wind  
     About her hair, and bind  
 Thine essence closer to her singing.

While I, a painter, find much pleasure  
 Beside thee limning thee at leisure ;  
     And bless the stolen time  
     That's taken for this rhyme  
 In sight of such a queenly treasure.

14.9.12

## THE GARDEN ROSE



ROSE, I've loved thee long too little ;  
 I've play'd with other, meaner things,  
 And, on my changeful wings  
 Of fancy, cast thee hence as spittle.

Had I but held thy generous plea  
 In mind, and not forgone thy grace,  
 Thou hadst not spurn'd my face  
 To-day, hiding thine own from me.

31.7.11

*Quite independent of Keats, whose comment—"To a friend who sent me some roses," I had never read, I conceived the above poem. Only to-day (21.12.37) have I discovered that Keats too had looked upon the wild rose—"the sweetest flower wild nature yields"—as far exceeding the garden rose. Has some to come roses, thus: as late I roamed in the happy fields, what time the skylark shakes the tumultuous dew from his lush clover covert;—*



## A Fragment

Upon the rosy thyme and gold 'Tom Thumblers'  
I lay me down to think alone,  
Filled with a sense of gladness and of love.  
Here all the land of human voice seems dumb,  
Drown'd by the wild bee's soothing drone  
And the plaint of ~~passer~~ <sup>passer</sup> falling from above.

6.30 PM. 30. 6. 14

on the Links, N. Berwick

\* Scat for pencil.

## The Spring and Summer of Life

Night never but daytime as roses  
was spoken in words from her lips:  
The child was the mother of women,  
Her wisdom and ~~work~~ <sup>work</sup> were ~~no slips~~ <sup>no slips</sup>.

She was Summer in the nursery,  
And Spring about the wood;  
No Autumn ever touch'd her,  
And Winter never could.

No child at home was merrier,  
No voice of theirs so sweet;  
The leader of their frolic,  
And the nimblest on her feet.

And Spring was in her features  
And the rose upon her cheek,  
When Death was sent to fetch her  
And she no more could speak.

19. xi. 14

At Oxenholme Junction  
These lines were written.

The lyric on the opposite page requires some explanation. I had, of course, always admired the garden rose but had paid far more attention to wild flowers, preferring to sketch them and linger over their simple beauties. It so happened that we had been given a particularly glorious rose which I put in a vase in my room and intended to do a picture of it, but I sprang two days over and with flowers that I had fattened and on the third day when I was ready to sketch the garden rose I found to my dismay that she had cast her petals and there they lay on the floor in front of me. Within a few minutes these eight lines came running from my pen, as neatly turned as anything I've ever written.



NOTE.—This lyric, The Buckling At The Burn, is an entirely imaginary poem, inspired only by the meaning of "to buckle", which is the Scots for "to join in marriage". There is a burn close to this little house, on the opposite side of the Almond, which at present is known to a few of the natives of the District by the name of "Buehlin". Mr James Gray (aged 87) has never even known it called by another name. Mr Charles Campbell, the chairman of the Cramond Parish Council, has recently purchased a small printed document, "Information for John Houston of Bracharod, Defender, against John Watson of Saughton, Pursuer," dated 1756, in which we are given the name in its correct spelling, viz. "The Buckling Burn", and about which was a right-of-way or old Kirk-road that caused so much trouble to those two owners. Knowing of Robert Burns's espousal to Mary of Argyll in Ayrshire — they swore to be good and true to one another over just "The Book" (The Bible), one on one bank of a stream and the other on the other — I felt pretty sure that this burn was christened The Buckling burn on account of a similar espousal, or espousals, that had taken place there, in the very secluded dell, previous to 1756. Up to the present I have not heard of any tradition even of such having taken place there.

13.4.14  
Old Farmhouse  
Cramond Bridge

W. G. G. G. G.



# THE BUCKLING AT THE BURN

**A**BOVE the bridge of Cramond  
 There runs a weeny brook,-  
 Where couples came to marry  
 With nothing but the Book :  
 Yea, many long-forgotten—  
 If we trust in what we learn—  
 Were mated in this fashion  
 And buckled at the burn.

The laverock was their wedding-bell,  
 The wooded dell the kirk,  
 The sweepers were the breezes  
 That knew no other work ;  
 The babbling brook the minister  
 That chats beside the fern,  
 And the lilies stood as bridesmaids  
 At the buckling by the burn.

'Twas gold and green and purple  
 Instead of carpets red—  
 Just Nature's floor they trod upon—  
 Where they came forth to wed ;  
 And all the decoration  
 Their eyes would e'er discern  
 Was budding trees and ivy  
 For the buckling at the burn.

The Bible—not the marriage-ring—  
 Had made them one for life ;  
 And the birds picked up the pledges  
 Of each true man and wife  
 And bore them through the country  
 To drop at every turn,  
 And sung to all the people  
 Of the buckling at the burn.\*

6.4.14

5

\* "She purloins all the winds that blow,  
 And every fog-wraith dim,  
 And bids the sea-birds flying north  
 Bear messages to him."

— John Greenleaf Whittier.

(I read this in "Amy Wentworth" for  
 the first time to-day - 8.5.29. —)

+ Only to-day (10.11.41) for  
 the first time I read  
 Alfred Austin's Coleridge  
in Song (1882) as an old  
 mine this stanza :  
 "Their temple was the earth,  
 The stars that in night's  
 Silence shone ;  
 And the planets being  
 Listening, they heard a  
 Sacred hymn,  
 And a voice within it  
 (an echo)  
 "Hail, Hail, Hail, hail,  
 and shine."  
 Austin was singing of the  
 poets buried in Westminster  
 Abbey ; I am here talking of  
 Nature's "poets" who pref-  
 erred the woody dell to a  
 church for marriage.



# THE NATIONAL EMBLEMS

## A GUESSING SONG



HAT'S that that grows to white or pink  
or red,  
That has a smile upon its face, and  
blows  
When it can smile no more—when it is  
dead,  
And has a tear within its heart?—The  
Rose.

What's that 'at proudly stans erect at  
Lauder,  
That maks yer tunefu' tongue begin tae  
whussel

Scots airs, an'—gin ye come frae owre the Border—  
Will mak' ye mind yersel' a wee?—The Thrussel.

What's that that's green and all but cleft in three,  
That creeps about your ankles where there's beef  
And 'blarnie' enough to make the growers free  
From Westminster for ever?—The Shamrock Leaf.

17.1.14

## TO A NARCISSUS

*Doing its little best to live in a pot in—I am ashamed to say—  
a dark corner of my own room*

**P**ALE bloom, of your kindred forsaken—  
Forced flower, far away from the wood  
Whence the source of your life had been taken—  
I wish it were there that you stood—  
On a bank of a brook that is flowing  
Through a glen that goes down to the sea,  
And there in your freedom be growing  
For others and me.



To The Winter Aeonile -

Welcome, my bonny Aeonile -!  
Thy smiling face and frill of green  
To me ~~has~~<sup>hath</sup> ever been  
The freshest, sweetest New Year's sight.

'Many flowers the first to brighten earth,  
Far more than the dazzling jewell'd crown  
Thro' night, monarchs own  
Thy simple, common crown is worth.

Thou mak'st ~~the~~<sup>the</sup> old year's sorrows cease,  
Easing a laden, wearied heart,  
~~And~~<sup>and</sup> giv'st me now a part  
Of that new life which bringeth peace.

25. 1. 16



A Fragment -

Thou must ~~go~~<sup>ye</sup>; thou wilt I shall again  
And taste the fountain of that woodland glen -  
The pure delights of rock and moss and fern  
Beside a crystal stream; thou ye shall know  
How rare and sweet the fount of Eskdale is,  
And feel the purest cause of worldly bliss.

1916



Published in my essay 'Tremula Habita'  
appearing in Chambers's Journal  
Nov. 1924



## 11 The Fumitory ("Fume de terre")

Rank Fumitor! — and Shakespeare named thee rightly —  
Child o' the mist, and curse to husbandry!  
Wax-dolls, with tender spreading mass of grey  
from leaves, in thee we look for some similitude  
To an earth-born cloud — a whiff of passing vapour.  
All ends, alas! as it began, in smoke  
And misty ambiguity, — thou art end-sown.\*  
Passing along, we find within thy furrow  
More "idle weeds" that know no hoe and share  
The soil with thee and "our sustaining corn" —  
Shame on thee Fumitor, shame on thy race! —  
Yet wait, there is that beauty in thee, that  
Thou touchest one weak spot within our hearts:  
Thy pink-complexion'd blooms, in other days,  
Were famed for adding beauty to the skin  
Of village belles of many a country side;  
And stems like thine, with doubly-feather'd leaves,  
From us must claim more than a passing look.  
<sup>But</sup> ~~thy~~ face belies thee, Fumitor, — sweet is  
Thy bark; thy bite is felt the whole field through.

5. 7. 14

Old Farmhouse

(rammed) Bridg.

 othneyill

\* —  
The Fumitory is a common weed in the  
corn fields, and is much used by the  
poor for medicinal purposes. It is  
said to be good for the stomach and  
liver, and is also used for the  
treatment of various other ailments.  
It is a very common weed, and is  
found in all parts of the country.



O mournful's your look and unliving !—  
 O droop of a dying face !  
 No sunlight with shadow for giving  
 You colour to add to your grace.  
 The breath of the wind as it passes  
 Would ripple your petals so free,  
 And you'd smile in the midst of the grasses—  
 Aye, there should you be.

4.3.14

## ROSES AND TEARS

*To a collector of porcelain ignorant of its history*



FAR-FAMED painter of porcelain—  
 A pauper with rent in arrears !—  
 Ah ! roses and wreaths of red  
 roses,  
 And behind them all—tears !

For the one who put smiles on your  
 tea-cup,  
 And sunshine on many a shelf  
 In his roses, a 'grey' rose Fate  
 painted—  
 A grey rose for himself.

Oh, handle that cup with more tenderness !  
 The furnace's heat at its height  
 And the brushwork minute had converted  
 A man's day to dark night !

And, perhaps, ye may think of some others,  
 To soften the bent of your mind—  
 Just think of your own painter brothers  
 Who to-day may go blind.

30.9.15



## THE WINDOW BY THE ELM

*To Isabel*

I LOVE the season best when the flower is on the elms—  
The bloom of faithful promise which never overwhelms—  
The hopes hung out of June days and autumn's richer dower,—  
I love the season best when the elms are red with flower.

I love the little window that looks out on the west,  
From which we see the elm-tree—the shelter of our nest—  
In days before the green leaf, adorn'd from tip to ground  
With clustering crimson blossom as each spring marches round.

I love our little window, deep-splay'd within the wall,  
Through which we peer on waking, through which rings Nature's call—  
The call to haste and paint her, and feed a willing mind  
The more with love for beauty and love for humankind.

As sunshine and the showers bring blossom to the tree,  
I fain would fill my sketch-book for the children and for thee—  
And this means more than ornament, yea, means your daily bread ;  
And, maybe, ye 'll remember that elm when I am dead.

10.4.14

Old Farmhouse, Cramond Bridge.

## THE EMPTY MARROW-BONE

AH ! a bone was a banquet,  
One crust was delicious,  
In times when the vicious  
Brush'd all the good things from our feet ;  
When we needed the warmth of a blanket  
In depth of the winter,  
And dreaded to enter  
The door of our home in the street.



## His / Rep-hole in the West -

Pass you along the lobby flags, and round  
a left-hand turn  
(By which you'll see a window-ledge cover'd  
with pots of fern),  
And up a steep flight of stairs you'll find  
his sleeping nest  
With a dormer window 'to the south and a  
prep-hole in the west; -  
He'd often dip his head below its lifted  
lower pane  
To snuff the breezes as they blow and look  
across the lane  
To see the sights and feel the charm so  
welcome to his mind.  
And every morn he look'd out a something  
fresh he'd find:  
The donkey bray'd to see him there, each  
cow would lift her head;  
A mallard from the old mill-race would  
leave ~~his~~ <sup>its</sup> ready bed;  
Beneath him strutted chattering, a  
waddling duck or two  
And (in summer time) would follow them a  
speaking duckling crew;  
And here a scuttler might be disturb'd and  
~~plunged~~ <sup>plunged</sup> to the bye  
Leaving his meal for fowls to peck and  
fight for in the mire;  
And there a big-boned "Craigcrook" boar (no  
prisoner through the night!)  
Would dig his snout into the ground and  
"umph" with all his might,  
And (if it be in May) a martin, fix'd to  
a window jamb,  
Plastering the old whin-stone with mud, would  
hear his grunted "Damn!"  
And drop her task and flit away the whole  
length of the house.



To hide her timid self a while like any  
frighten'd mouse.

Across the striding, beyond the ~~low~~ <sup>cave</sup>, see a bend  
of beautiful trees,  
To-day so still which to-morrow ~~will wave~~ <sup>will wave</sup> in the  
breath of a western breeze;  
And three big trees at the dawning of day, when  
the leaf is red on the bough,  
In changing lights, from darksome to gay,  
For an artist are "good snow".

Changes from "tatties" to clover, from eye-grass  
to wurgels or wheat  
All through his mind pass'd over, all was a  
lovable treat:  
Learning the life of a farmer, treading no  
tires as he went -  
Respecting the tongue of his charmer - that's  
how his leisure was spent.  
Lingering long in the open, wielding the  
pencil and pen,  
He work'd with the will of a Trojan for  
the good of his fellow men.

25. 6. 14  
116 Farmhouse  
Cramond Bridge  
Linlithgowshire

### Pride And Sorrow

To hide up sorrow's only possible  
To those who feel it most;  
And I, who've suffered more than I can tell,  
Am proud to make this boast -  
For pride's the strongest-passion of my life,  
And pride has been my aid,  
And none will ever know - not e'en my wife -  
The secret, I'm afraid.

25. 9. 21



# The Silk Glove

To Isabel

When I was Lord of Autumn,  
And you were Lady Gay,  
With love I came and bought 'em  
And stole the rest away.

— And now, where are your kisses? —  
Lost? — gone for evermore,  
With only serpent's kisses  
Henceforth for me in store?

I'm still your Lord of Autumn,  
Still be my Lady Jay;  
So I, who've often bought 'em,  
May have some more to-day.

Nov. 1 1914

## Bucking Sally

To Rt Colonel P. V. Kelly, C.M.C., D.S.O., 3rd (King's Own) Hussars.

I sat on the back of a good-looking bay,  
So perfect in mouth and so mortal —  
I thought so at least till the end of the day,  
When I'd ample excuse for a quarrel!  
Not a horse of a hundred I knew in the place  
That had carried me over the Valley  
Had now quite thrown me in school or in chase  
Save this one, the bad bucking Sally.  
Pig-jumping is common in barracks and school,  
But bucking — bad bucking, uncommon.  
And scarce had she offered to make me a fool  
When I knew I was leaving a rum 'un:  
I had had my fun on the star of your stud,  
And we'd just about come to the Valley —  
A plunge, a buck, another, then — then!  
And I said good-bye to your Sally!

\* The 'Sally' was  
'if it be that'  
There is a line  
Shakespeare  
Julius Caesar  
saying thus —  
'I am not so  
with you I shall  
satisfy you.'  
17.11.14

Published in  
Bailey's Magazine,  
under "An Imported  
Puck-jumper"  
Feb. 11, 21.

4.12.19  
Warburg BKS  
Ad. 10.10.19

with a will



## Our Window-preping Rose

To Walter Crane, RWS.

We love these clustering roses  
that are preping through the pane,  
and bless the freshening dews  
Of this June day's gentle rain.

There's no one here to love them  
So well as Bell and I, —  
their scent wafts up above them  
Each night to where we lie;

And all day long we see them,  
when'er we turn to look —  
It's as hard for us to flee them  
As for fish the baited hook!

10.6.14  
Old Farmhouse  
Crabtree Bridge



A Volume of Sweet Lyrics  
speaking to its Author

Did I think when you wrote me I'd lay there?  
Did I think when you wrote me they'd play there  
At cards till the passing of dawn?  
Had I dream'd of being made castaway there,  
Had I thought I would <sup>er</sup> see a day there,  
I had wish'd I had never been born!

Jan<sup>y</sup> 1912



Looking Back

I miss that sunlit seashore  
which <sup>that</sup> once I christened 'Rivados Tree';  
Time was when all my <sup>holiest</sup> thoughts  
Each Sunday there would centre be.

9.7.16  
Davidson's Mains



Published in  
The Lanthorn Chronicle  
(1923)



Look ! a bone without marrow,  
 Kept for more than six seasons—  
 For melancholy reasons—  
 To bring back the days of that feat—  
 When we fared not so well as a sparrow,  
 Yet watch'd like a sentry  
 And toiled by the entry  
 To hold what was ours in the street.

12.10.14

## OUR REREDOS TREE

*[Being the title given by me to a sycamore tree, seen through the east window of the temporary church, Davidson's Mains, Midlothian]*



TS lovely leaves they are green—of the  
 greenest green,  
 Its boughs are grey—the greyest of  
 grey ;  
 And the golden sun glints through yon  
 sycamore tree  
 As we kneel in prayer on this Sabbath  
 day ;  
 And that sunlit form—our Reredos tree—  
 Seems the holiest screen of screens to  
 me.

God can give a wondrous grace and an endless lustre  
 All His own to whatever He handles ;—  
 Not a touch of man is seen in that perfect tree,  
 And the light of the sun burneth brighter than candles.  
 So the sunlit form of our Reredos tree  
 Seems the holiest screen of screens to me.

18.2.11



## THE SPIRIT OF THE ROTH

**E**ACH field, each track, and every crag  
On every mountain far and near,  
Was known to one whose body rests  
Where runs the Rotha to the mere.

Painful that day for Grasmere folk,  
When all in grief assembled there  
To see a man so good laid low,  
Where runs the Rotha to the mere.

He knew that 'man was made to mourn'—  
He had himself shed many a tear;  
But smiles would brighten up his face  
Where runs the Rotha to the mere.

Not Nature only from the fells  
Could touch his quickened eye or ear,  
But little children as they passed,  
Where runs the Rotha to the mere:

No one loved children more than Wordsworth;  
Their mirth and laughter chased the fear  
Of death and sorrow from his dwelling,  
Where runs the Rotha to the mere;

The heart of every cottage child  
To him was sweet and very dear,  
Its simple pleasures soothed his soul,  
Where runs the Rotha to the mere;

He loved to watch it as it grew  
And mark its progress year by year;  
And many a one he called his friend  
Where runs the Rotha to the mere.

The outside world could ne'er forget  
A man so great and so sincere:—  
And that is why the dead still breathes  
Where runs the Rotha to the mere.

13.5.16

10

"Keep fresh the grass upon his grave,  
O Rotha, with thy living wave!  
Sing him thy best! for few or none  
Heard thy voice right, now he has gone."

— Matthew Arnold, April 1850.

We wonder if Richard Dade, who wrote ~~that~~ <sup>the</sup> exceedingly clever Shakespeare  
and that Crash (Basil Blackwell, 1931), heard his "voice right"? Anyway  
his satire on W.W. is immense — p.p. 98-105 would make a hedgehog,  
laugh. But he adds that his cynical Ballads were destined to bring about,  
as Wordsworth had predicted, a revolution in English poetry.... He was  
now living at Grasmere in the Lake District, going for long walks  
in the rain and the thinnest of frosts and often without a hat, conversing  
with old women and sheep and village half-wits and studying pond life  
and his soul. It was impossible to get away from William, he seemed to



# The Mystical Maid Of The Hebrides

What is it there they see in the distance  
glittering so at the end of the reach?  
What is it there that has startled the sea-birds?  
A maid and her boat on the silver beach -  
That mystical maid of the briny billows,  
Lingers long by the bows of her boat  
And watching the tide of the boiling ocean,  
Waiting the time to set her afloat.

Only appearing in roughest of weather,  
When the wind's from the north and the moon's in the skirts,  
Never launching her skiff in sight of the shepherds -  
Seen only as over the ocean she flies.  
Soon will she heave her into the water  
To be borne on the waves of the boundless deep,  
Soon will she leave the shore of the Crofters  
To be tossed <sup>in</sup> the ~~ocean~~ spray when they're all asleep.

Rudderless, sail-less, there will she hurry  
Urged by the wind, and lightly she'll ride  
Dash'd with the foam and skimming the billows,  
Driven along by an ebbing tide;  
Spied by the night-watch alone of the sailors,  
Haunting the deeps for hour after hour  
And sailing again to land at the dawning  
To be seal'd out of sight by her mystical power.

Published in  
The Oban Times  
1910



he wrote at times; and all the time he kept on pouring out poetry by the faithful.  
This sort of thing was bound to tell, and presently he became a local  
institution.... William said that poetry was going strong, but there  
was no money in it."



## Her Initials In The Sand

She only left these letters - the green ones in the sand.

I am loitering by a river, where wagtail and the Coot  
Divide the river shelter of rock and wrack and root;  
The vole is quite a stranger, and conies shun the spot  
Where floods have made an ingress & sheep have lain to rot.

Yet the spot has one oasis, for here upon the sand  
You'd see the rare invention of some wee lassie's hand:  
She fancied moss might grow there, so with a skilful hand  
She printed her initials in green upon the sand.

The moss took root, and flourish'd without a glint of sun;  
And often she would wander to see what she had done.  
Flood after flood pass'd o'er it - the river rose and sank,  
But the lassie's - neat initials show'd firm upon the bank.

And <sup>here</sup> they grew long after the day she planted them -  
By rock and root and wreckage an emerald river fern,  
Unknown to all save Harold, who led me to the spot  
And pointed where to find them, lest they should be forgot.

10. 3. 14

On the banks of the Almond  
(Ramond Bridge)

The Speed of Spring -  
Impromptu.

'Tis wonderful,  
The speed of spring! -  
How all was bare a week ago,  
And every thing  
To-day we pull  
Is green with leaf or buds to blow!

10. 5. 22

(A very late spring indeed this year - a spring overlapping summer. The later it comes in the quicker <sup>it passes.</sup>)

othergill

Her short life came before me <sup>and</sup> her dear  
sweet childish ways,  
~~Those days when we were young~~ the love of other  
ways <sup>lost</sup> to us forever -  
And the days were dropping quickly as I  
pressed his little hand  
and laid upon these letters - her memorial  
in the sand.







## LIBERTY IN LOVE

*'He may love all, so that he loves me too. Who would monopolise a poet's heart large as the universe?'*

**I** STILL have 'freedom in my love  
And in my soul am free';  
And yet I've given my love to one,  
Since hers is given to me.

'Tis said that angels in heaven alone  
Enjoy such liberty;  
But I, no angel, here below  
In love feel just as free.

And why?—I've learnt to love but one,  
And she has loved but me;  
By loving one I love the rest,  
And so love liberty.

11.2.11

※  
"Those who keep going the longest who love most"  
Said Sir J. Crichton-Browne.  
But by love he did not  
imply lust, which is  
quite another thing. He  
lived to the age of 97.  
— 1.2.38.

## UNFEIGNED LOVE

**F**ROM memory's page no love can pass that was  
Unfeigned and devout;  
No new love, howsoever deep, can cast  
The old completely out.

As scent of rose-leaves penetrates a chamber  
Even if their life hath gone,  
So sweetest thoughts of thee, passed out of sight,  
In me shall linger on.

25.9.09

12

※ This love means a genuine living, loving,  
helpful personal sympathy with all people  
around one, and has nothing to do with  
voluptuous love, as some might suppose.

"Think what it is — not to hate anything but sin; to  
be full of love to every creature; to be frightened at  
nothing; to be sure that all things will turn to good."  
— Dinah Morris, in George Eliot's  
Adam Sedgwick.

By loving a man or woman outside my own family,  
I mean, of course, "not sentimentally but essentially".  
as some wag has put it — was it Johnson?



## CARDS AND WINE

**N**O listening heart for me is thine ;  
Thy tastes are luxury, cards and wine.  
And so ye lead the stranger's life,  
Leaving me here alone—but still thy wife.

Twice having left me so, in vain  
Ye may return to me again—  
My heart is this time broken—dying—  
And 'neath a grave-stone ye will find me lying.

But should ye come, look on my stone  
And know I loved ye as my own,  
And loved none else in all my life ;—  
And ye may love the memory of thy wife.

Yet, if thy heart be hardened still,  
And no sad tears thine eye can fill ;  
That I was thine, and ye were mine,  
Forget—but oh ! restrain thy taste for wine. §

31.1.16

## THE ELECTRICITY OF LOVE

**I**F not the face I love,  
To aid me in my daily labour,  
The thought of it must sometimes come :  
I care not whether brush or sabre\*  
The weapons we must wield  
Should e'er be dipping deep in love.

For how, without that love  
To drive in hope and sheer resistance,  
How can a spirit's wheel fly round ?  
I cannot clash with my existence ;  
So, for thy sake my weapon shall  
For e'er be dipping deep in love.

23.1.16

13

\* "I have loved you ; how when I rode in war  
Your face went floated in among men's helmets,  
Your voice went through the shrieks of slipping swords."

—Alfred C. Swinburn's Chastity

† In Shelley's "Lines", commencing with  
"Far, far away, O ye  
Halcyons of memory!"

I find these words :

"Once having gone, in vain  
Ye come again."

§ Let not the reader think I am a tactless person.  
I have written this line. I am not one, though I have  
always been known to restrain my taste for alcoholic  
beverages. *Ex* 28.8.42.



## KING EDWARD, VII. LYING IN STATE



WITH national grief our souls expand ;  
Ourselves from idle play we tear,  
Spurred by a deep but just emotion ;  
Led by a loyal and true devotion  
Into the heart of our British land—  
The storied Hall of Westminster—  
Straightway we join the countless band  
To see our late King lying there.

\* \* \* \* \*

'Twas there we saw the catafalque  
Of plain and unadornèd wood,  
Clothed with a shroud of broidered satin,  
On which King Edward's coffin stood.

On this lay draped the silken folds  
Of the Royal banner ; and above,  
The jewelled Crown and Orb and Sceptre—  
Fit emblems of his rule of love.

And at the coffin's head a chaste  
ProceSSIONal Cross, upright in view  
(To symbolise his sworn religion),  
O'er gold-tailed, purple plush prie-dieu.

Here, too, four gentlemen-at-arms ;  
And on either side the bier, bay-wreathed,  
Two officers of the Grenadiers,  
Each with a hand on sword unsheathed.

And at each corner of the dais,  
A stalwart Yeoman of the Guard ;  
And at the foot, bronze-like, a Ghoorka  
Of the King's Own Native Bodyguard.

\* \* \* \* \*



\* It was Gray, the poet, / think who spoke of that, till as

The poet who broke the bonds of Rome, /  
A king who in some other respect - in so glorifying  
of insignificance. Four hundred and fifty years after  
William I's time it was in touch a king who  
Church, after expounding its hideous  
behaviour, and thus reversing the order  
of things, though his licentious disposition  
hardly qualified him to go down in posterity

Recalling Lanfranc, First  
Anglo-Norman Archbishop of (and is busy

" / saw in the dead-dove the agent of the thinker "

Parent of rare ideas! -  
"Scholar and morning star  
Of light" in age after  
An age of force and fraud!  
With praise we were ought  
To sing thy name, who taught  
A king to sheathe the sword  
And quell a Saxon's fears.

Scourer of tyrants' face!  
When England most had need,  
Ideas begat the deed -  
Thy learning forced her king  
To rule by law and right.  
Strong on a rock of might,  
A Church thou'st raised to sing  
The Freedom of the race.

28. 12. 16

### Striking Grave-digger

When we hear of the grave-digger striking!  
We wonder who'll bury the dead!  
It is not quite the trade to my liking,  
And not very easy 'tis said.

Better give 'em the extra they crave for -  
We must somehow get rid of the dead;  
It isn't the first job-men crave for,  
And our friends would not have us in bed!

10. 2. 21

as the saviour of the Church in England - the one who  
did actually, by his dogmatism, bring about the Reformation.

Published in  
The Scottish Chronicle  
Jan. 26. 1923  
under "Poems by the way."



A Durham In Miniature  
[Holy Trinity Church, Dunfermline]

With Margaret to rule, the priests were saved all  
- need of further search -  
So sweetly masterful her priestly, her zeal reclaim'd  
the Church.

She built a house - or stone or wood we know not,  
A temple meet for prayer;  
And Malcolm Canmore and his saintly queen came  
both to worship there.

King David next, their youngest, greatest son, rais'd  
here a pile of stone,  
A very Durham Church in miniature, in memory  
of his own.

But now yon Norman nave is all that's left of  
David's sacred fane,  
And what's been added since his ancient day seems  
not so proudly plain.

Published in  
The Scottish Chronicle  
Nov 10, 1922

88. 8. 16  
Dunfermline

A Fragment

Fair glen of ancient Roslin,  
Midlothian's choicest pearl  
of sweet unscathed beauty,  
To us thy past unfold:  
Mysterious glades of greenwood,  
And thou, thou silent tree,  
Speak with the waters round thee,  
and tell your tale to me.

Lines written in a sketch-book,  
while sketching Roslin  
Castle, seated by the  
ancient yew, 1912



Thousands will call to mind that day—  
 Thousands were there from morn till night,  
 Thousands have stood austere and voiceless  
 To view that restful scene, and noiseless  
 Have passed upon their saddened way,  
 The better for the solemn sight—  
 Resolved to love more, come what may,  
 Their God and King with all their might.  
 May 19, 1910.

## A CORONATION ODE

*Lines written for a School Treat*

**S**COTLAND'S happiness to-day  
 Is the Coronation.  
 Leaving sorrow out of the way,  
 Join the jubilation ;  
 Every care cast into space  
 With this explication—  
 GEORGE THE FIFTH WITH KINGLY GRACE  
 CARETH FOR THE NATION.  
 We are here, though he is there,  
 With a prelibation  
 That he 'll always do and dare  
 For our conservation.  
 Join, then, in the jubilation  
 For a glorious coronation.  
 10 a.m., 22.6.11

## KING GEORGE AN' HIS AIN \*

**E**VERY blazon'd coat engraved,  
 Every handkerchief that waved,  
 Every British flag that fluttered,  
 Every cheer his subjects utter'd—

\* Lines conceived at the ancient Moubray House, High Street, during their Majesties' progress through the city of Edinburgh.



Breath'd from out that human forge  
Of love and loyalty—was a message  
Proffer'd by the glowing heart,  
On each and every Scottish part,  
To their monarch, Good King George.

Every turn and every look,  
As each welcome hand he shook,  
Every smile that left his carriage,  
Bright as bridegroom's after marriage—  
Adding fuel to their forge—  
Was a clear and certain presage  
Of the warmth of regal heart,  
On his truly English part,  
Of their monarch, Good King George.

18.7.11

A TRIUMPH SONG — On Their Majesties' return from India

Inspired by Thee, omnipotent above,  
Who makest wise an earthly Royalty,  
Sing we thanks for our good King and Queen.  
And singing, let us breathe some love  
Across the sea, where Princes' loyalty  
Just as genuine as our own has been.

Loving well our King and Queen,  
And the loyalty that's been,  
Sing we then our thanks to Thee,  
"Ruler of the earth and sea."

The triumph song the Church demands  
Is for the victory of Royalty, —  
Not of formen, but of constant-friends;  
The bonds are strongly woven strands  
Of regal love and eastern loyalty,  
Coupling close the Empire's farthest ends.

Loving well our King and Queen,  
And the loyalty that's been,  
Sing we then our thanks to Thee,  
"Ruler of the earth and sea."

published in  
the Scottish Chronicle  
1872. 1923  
under "Penny Gleanings"

6.2.12



## The Aene of Love

The Kiss is but the Spring of Love;  
Love ~~and~~ only warms as time goes by,  
And reachest not its greatest heat  
Till twain have parted with a sigh.

8.8.09

## The Stone of Destiny - Edward I, s Booty

That mystical Scottish stone,  
The "Stone of Destiny"  
By Edward was taken from Scots  
In the thirteenth century.

He seized the "Stone of Destiny"  
That cruel Scottish loss -  
And all the ancient vulture,  
And took St Margaret's Cross  
And brought them to his England.  
But the Scots they felt the injury  
And soon avenged the loss.

For there came a William Wallace,  
And after him a Bruce,  
And then came Bannockburn  
To bring about a truce;  
And the Scots regained their freedom -  
But not their "Stone of Destiny"  
Won back by Robert Bruce.\*

But England now loves Scotland,  
And Scotland has of late  
Loved us, and tried her utmost  
To hide her hate of hate;  
So let's shake the hands of Kinship  
And leave the Stone to Fate -  
Let's leave the "Stone of Destiny"  
To guard our mutual state.

Published in  
The Scottish Chronicle  
2.6.11.

\* It is supposed that in the Treaty of Northampton (1328) all the above mentioned National belongings, indicative of Scottish Independence, were included by Bruce, who died the year afterwards. But Edward I's grandson, Edward III., omitted to restore the Stone of Destiny.



## Nature's Address to the Painter

Fling away friendships of man for a season —  
Say adieu to the town with its smoke and its crush;  
(Come with me now and I'll show you the reason,  
Water by me, sketch by me, painter and brush.

The plough-share the colour of earth is improving,  
Woodland and plain put on coats that are new;  
Bolster-like clouds all around are seen moving  
As ships in full canvas, in oceans of blue.

Rise by the light of the spring day that's dawning,  
Hearing the strains of the black-bird and thrush;  
Out in the country early each morning,  
Water by me, sketch by me, painter and brush.

2. 3. 12

Lines written beneath  
Coortophine hill

## Bread-and-butter Meals

Oh! miserable I feel,  
With reflex asthma troubling me,  
And gastric spasms doubling me,  
Inflated right to bursting,  
Paying penalty for dusting  
A plate of bread — our usual stodgy meal!

It's bread to-day and bread tomorrow,  
Bread-and-butter at each meal,  
With no'er an appetite to borrow  
For digesting such a meal!

Oh! sorrowful I feel,  
To think my children share with me  
This everlasting bread and tea,  
No change but jam or butter.  
"Each day 's the same" they mutter,  
Seated before their cheerless, frugal meal.

It's bread to-day and bread tomorrow,  
Bread and butter at each meal,  
Are thoughts which cause me nought but sorrow  
When I join them at their meal.

11. 1. 09  
Craigville  
Blackhall



## The Border Maid And Her Calf

I passed an ancient tower, that long ago  
Knew many a cunning cattle-raid,  
When out there came, with features all aglow,  
A bonnie, blushing Border maid.  
I stopped, and asked the maid the name it bore.  
"Rudhope", she said, "we ca's it noo;  
An' if ye'd care tae look in through the door  
Ye'd see my wee white cauf an' soo."  
And while <sup>she</sup> stood within that ancient door  
She told me many tales of old -  
How ancestors of hers in Border war  
Had faced and fought the raiders bold.



I thought if those who raided long ago  
Had seen what I had seen that day,  
They'd leave the cattle there to stand and low  
And bear the bonnie maid away.  
I asked her if she'd care to leave the tower,  
And come and live in town with me;  
Said she, "Oh! Sir, that isna' i' my power -  
I canna leave, - my cauf wad dee."  
Since all her love was centred in a calf  
I could not press the point, so said  
Good-bye (unlike the raider) with a laugh  
To the bonnie, blushing Border maid.

May 1920  
Cramond Bridge.

This is, of course, like many others I've written, an entirely  
imaginary poem or ballad - I'm not in the habit of giving,  
or even thinking of giving, young girls an invitation like this!!  
I was not, too, the engager of our own servant-maids - when we  
had any (years ago now) - and but left that job to my wife.



## GENIUS IN ART



THE training of painters makes many to spare—

Painters are plenty ; *artists* are rare.

A temperament's needed before art is worn—

The gift of creating's a genius born.

Many there are who will wave the 'red flag,'

And the man that's uncultured will swallow the brag.

Genius *never* could call out a lie,  
Genius waits for the comer to buy :

Professional posture is only the *man*—  
Art was in *artists* before they began :

Creators are quiet, with art planted deep,  
Leaving posterity harvests to reap.

Second-hand paintings are frequently seen ;  
First-hand from Nature—how few there have been !

Critics pick genius bare to the bone—  
Few will live long by their own meat alone.

Linking traditions of art to your own  
Is *not* robbing part of the chain that has grown :

Tinged with tradition a work is improved ;  
Much of one Master, the merit's removed.

Artists and painters may struggle and fall,  
But genius for ever remains on the wall.

7.5.16



# Life Before Art

The grouping of his figures, with their natural rustle, <sup>I pose,</sup>  
 Those tender grays and greens and flushes of the rose,  
 Are perfect in their way - so far as Corot painting goes.  
 But pictures are not life, as each true artist knows.

(published in  
 The Kentish Chronicle  
 1923)

It's living people, birds and trees I'd round my being bind -  
 Ah, life is what I long for now <sup>improves</sup> to ~~enrich~~ the mind!  
 Like Corot - let all artists too (I should not seem unkind)  
 Love life before their art - and then their art will find.

12.7.13

[Lines written before a  
 beautiful painting by Corot,  
 and after sitting too many  
 days together painting from  
 memory in my studio, &  
 suffering in consequence from  
 a dull mind - a lack of  
 fresh inspiration from nature,  
 what many artists lay them-  
 selves open to.]

Had not Corot loved the  
 people and things around him  
 as he did, he never would have  
 been the man and artist he was.



"The author of 'The Last Epistle to Tennyson'  
 whom he might be 'has hit off me'  
 feelings at the moment I wrote  
 these above stanzas, when he scribbled  
 down these lines: -  
 "A hill on the brink the blue hare-bell  
 breaks o'er to see its bonny sal"  
 And sitting 'chipping' a 'ivy' lawn  
 a wading-waggon on a stone.  
 An' forster lad throw to the wind around  
 'our canopy this is holy ground'  
 'wis' as its highest - not 'fashion'  
 The poet's 'deed', and this is Edwin."

5.10.21

## Of Edwin Alexander's \* Work

Canine coat and camel  
 Did not come to hamper  
 Edwin's wider mind -  
 Flowers, peacocks, wee birds,  
 Sometimes sea and sea-birds  
 In his frames we find.

Those who love much detail,  
 Those who care to retail  
 What he has to sell  
 Know he's always plenty  
 Ready done and dainty  
 Full of art as well.

In a free, land low tone  
 (Better that than no tone!)  
 Foursome some with rules;  
 But with him there's colour,  
 Though a wee bit duller,  
 Than the Southern schools.

Edwin, 1920  
 (Vancouver)



## Rabun - Every Painter's Love

He launch'd into a painter  
Such as Scotland never saw;  
Now he's gain'd the highest triumph,  
He's every painter's love.

No more masterful painter of portraits  
Ever stood before easel with brains -  
What grasp of man's <sup>spirit</sup> ~~character~~! What technique!  
What dash to the last 'he retains!  
Himself, and those soldiers and senators -  
What we see on our National walls -  
His pictorial achievement - can rank with  
Velazquez and Hals.

8. 1. 11  
Lines written in the  
National gallery of Scotland.

## To the Memory of Phil May

His love was the love of a line. ~~F~~  
In the pow'r of his line shone the will, -  
Not the will of an unknown scribbler,  
But the line of a lifelong skill  
That was limn'd for ever.

And that line a line of his own,  
As the humour that flow'd from his till  
Fun of fun. We can never forget him -  
His humour and line live still,  
Growing greater than ever!

## The Stick-fire

To a Parson Friend, in a postscript.

This takes a <sup>bit of</sup> beating!  
(I'll explain at our next meeting). -  
We're just as badly off as your Church mouse;  
died our drinking and our eating  
is in proportion to the beating -  
With one stick-fire to warm <sup>the</sup> bliss'd house!

18. 2. 21

Yes! was the author of it!  
published in the Scottish  
Chronicle (26 Jan 1923)  
with a few words  
of praise - a surprise  
on the public.



## THE DIVINE PAINTER

**H**IS art is never done :  
That all may own His power  
He gilds the golden sun,  
He silvers every star,  
'He paints the wayside flower.'

'Tis He that warms the heather  
With colour of purple wine ;  
The tiniest wild-bird's feather,  
The ore of the deepest mine,  
Is tinged with paint divine.

And the green of the mountain tops,  
The red of the muscadine,  
The gold of the ripening crops  
And gentian sapphirine,  
Are brushed with a touch divine.

His pigments touch each heart ;  
And all acknowledge them  
The crowning point of art—  
That cherished diadem  
Replete with many a gem.

All praise to Him who makes them  
With wondrous, perfect art ;  
All praise to Him who paints them  
To please the thankful heart.

1.10.11



## RAEBURN'S METHOD

*Echoing from a now silent Sitter*

**H**E took his palette and his brushes,  
Retreated gracefully step by step—  
(No damned professional rushes,  
As if I were some demirep !)—  
Looking the while me through and through,  
Then with his paints a space he drew.

And while he paints by broader masses, The others—asses !—as they can  
Shove in a myriad splashes, To give us more the form of man;  
And in their ignorance—half-blind—  
Mislay in detail all the mind.

1.5.12

## WHISTLER'S ART

*Inscribed to Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Pennell*



**H**ISTLER'S the blade (all else in shade)  
To please the changing people,  
Who pulled him down, and called  
him clown,  
Then popp'd him on a steeple !

He'd heed no schools with rotten rules—  
He sketch'd all day for pleasure ;  
With random paint, without restraint,  
He limned a nation's treasure.\*

'Flinging a pot of paint,' or not,  
He'll work no more—no, never ;

But by his rule the New Art School  
Was born to last for ever.

4.9.12

\* 'Battersea Bridge,' purchased for 2000 guineas.



## Corot and His Enemies

The slighting of his earlier work was  
very soon forgot,  
with - never a taint of bitterness he bore  
it as his lot;  
Too full of love to shelter wrongs - with  
Nature in his eyes,  
In confidence he "walked with God", a simple  
man and wise.

Published in  
Scottish Chronicle / 3. xi. 13

## Millot's Religion

He thought the yoke and burden natural  
Of men who delve and cut the wood;  
He said 'twas good because it's moral,\*  
And beautiful because it's good.

12. 12. 13

\* Supported  
by evidence  
of reason.

## Corot's Work

A Corot's work seems like a church, with  
highest thoughts to teach;  
It's silence is not dead or dumb, but quick  
with soundless speech.  
It clamours not for instant notice - whose manner's  
too demure;  
But when at last it draws you to it, its hold  
is then secure:  
It spreads beyond the gilded frame the blatant  
paint, until  
In ever-widening gentle waves it makes the  
rest look still.

Published in  
Scottish Chronicle

3. xi. 13

[Lines written after reading Sidney Allmatt's  
Corot.]

Spotting Art of 1923 compared with that of a hundred years ago.  
The "critics" declare we've moved not a foot;  
But this is the truth to the letter:  
The sport of it all has been just as well put,  
And the art of it all much better.

16 Oct. 1923



## At The Shrine Of Technique

I've worshipp'd at the shrine of technique  
For many, many happy years;  
Unlike the one whose parents forced him,  
I've loved the task, and shed no tears.

So many have the inspiration,  
And make a bold and brilliant start;  
But speed and prowishness from patience  
Are sometimes not unknown to part!

I gave up all imaginations,  
which ~~stole~~<sup>steal</sup> away ~~my~~<sup>dexterity</sup> -  
To render life I found around me  
With faith and rare sincerity.

Only a life of strict simplicity,  
with honest work - and work alone -  
And homage paid to high ideals,  
Could yield the subtle line and tone

Such as I now am proud to boast of.  
- An' at least life's livable indeed,  
Here in this hollow by the Almond,  
With knowledge stored and springing used.

Old Farmhouse  
(Almond Bridge)  
February 1913

Whispered at a meeting.

our orator tonight ~~is~~<sup>is</sup> superfine -  
A man ~~who means~~<sup>who means</sup> to make a heavy splash!  
But ~~and~~<sup>and</sup> ~~some~~<sup>some</sup> lightening from Shakespeare line  
To gild his ~~language~~<sup>language</sup> with its flash.

Edinburgh  
187. 2. 21



# A VISION OF 'ARMOUR'

AT NORWOOD, ALLOA

I SAT in a tapestried corner half asleep by a glowing fire,  
With the book on my knees of old Beckford\* that had brought  
me my soul's desire.

The room I was in was the smoke-room in the home of a sports-  
man at heart,  
The windows were all of them latticed, and the whole of it savoured of  
art.

I was dreaming of rare compositions carried out by a master's hand;  
I had visions of fairy-land colour—the schemes of the best of a band  
That has painted for ages and ages the work and the fun of the chase,  
And buried the science of hunting in the breast of a sport-loving race.

Just a single soft light from a burner fell gently over my head,  
And lit up a plate of this artist by the page of an author dead . . .  
I arose from dreams of perfection to swear that, with infinite pains,  
I too would be even with 'Armour'—if he'd lend me <sup>his</sup> helm full of brains!

2.2.12

\* Beckford's 'Thoughts upon Hunting,' a new edition, illustrated by  
G. D. Armour of 'Punch' fame.

A rare type of sportsman and painter is this one — great  
cavalier of art!  
We know him well in Edin; the place where he made his start.  
That suggestive elimination, that flowing selective line,  
That character, humour and action, we know well without  
even a whine.

He's interpreted sport for the sportsman as none have on canvas before,  
When he shows us with touch of a master the essence of hunting lore.  
The breadth of his simple handling — its vigour sustained without rush —  
Is the fruit of a strong personality flowing forth from the point of his brush.

The beauty of Crawhall's <sup>21</sup> dug deep in him — his spacing and dainty ways,  
And the tone of the two Alexanders, good friends of his boyhood days —  
Their restrained and judicious colour — had come to his timely aid:  
Of all those in his art-bed of painting he <sup>has</sup> shovelled much in with his spade.

Mark well how he handles the pencil — how he chafes in his horses and rubs  
In the lines of their coats with the spread of a Marshall, ~~and then~~ a stubbs,  
Faith! he ~~shows~~ shows us he loves what is spotting and most of all hunting, of course;  
And he proves too there's truth in the motto, the best friend we have is the horse.

Deep down in the heart of each sportsman George Armour was well at rest;  
But in serious breasts he may linger to be rank'd along with the best:  
We wish him good speed with his pictures, success for all time to his art;  
From the ken of the Edinburgh people such a spirit will never depart.

25. xi. 12



# Wait—Not Till We Be Dead

Blossom at the grave-side  
Casts no fragrance backward  
O'er the weary day;  
Bring your flowers and put them  
At the bed-side by us  
While we suffering lay:



Alabaster boxes,  
Full of scent of sympathy,  
Break not when we're dead;  
Open them before us,  
Soothe our lives with sweetness—  
Cheer us up in bed.

Sally not with words too—  
With the living utterance—  
Things ye meant to say;  
Say them when we're living,  
Kindly ones and thrilling—  
Before we go away.

W. L. Gillingham 3. xii. 22



John Macallan Swan, RA, RWS,  
Sculptor & Painter

Romance of a mystical-nature  
That invests the creation of beast—  
Its character, form, and true stature,  
Is that on which Swan lov'd to feast;  
Its fearful and wonderful fashion,  
Made by the same hand as ourselves,  
Its wild and poetical passion,  
We've seen on his shelves.

No human affections love him  
From the beast and the beast alone:  
As with Landseer and others before him,  
No fanciful sentiment won  
The smiles or the tears of the people:—  
He left it — as far off his tone  
In art as the top of a steeple —  
Severely alone.

His interest was mainly artistic —  
Realism to him with no rising —  
Inspired by the beautiful and mystic,  
The subtle and complicated blending  
Of wonderful soulless creatures —  
No fellows of ours, nor yet wild  
Fierce monsters with horrible features  
To frighten a child.

Essentially modern is this study  
Of brute for his brutish sake,  
And far, far removed from the ruddy  
Interest form and the make  
Of the beasts of Rubens and Snyder,  
From whom now the palm (with his snakes,  
His sirens and lions and tigers)  
This artist now takes.



When we glance at the lion assuaging  
 His thirst, or the sinuous panther,  
<sup>alive</sup>  
~~surely~~ and elastic, engaging  
 Our thought for a while, we answer  
 That never before had we seen  
 Wild beasts, or in paint or in clay,  
 So wrought (as they ought to have been)  
 Till Swann's brilliant day.

The grandeur of Barge, his action  
 And dignified form, and the grace  
 Imparted to slender section  
 Of boat-kind by Frimick, we trace  
 In Swann's masterful paintings and sculpture.  
 — On such work, no wonder, to-day  
 The dealer swoops down, like a vulture,  
 To feed on his prey!

17.2.10

[This poem arrived in London  
 too late for publication,  
 otherwise it would have pre-  
 faced the catalogue printed  
 for Colnaghi, who sold  
 Swann's pictures and sculpture  
 after his death. Colnaghi  
 wrote me a very nice letter  
 about it.]

Mr R. Alexander was  
 judging the Arabs in the  
 Spring Show, in London, this  
 year, 1922; and was  
 elected a member of the  
 Council of the Arab Horse  
 Society.

### Of Robert Alexander's Work

Donkeys, dogs and horses —  
 Horses off the courses —  
 Never in the <sup>chase</sup> ~~race~~;  
 Standing in a stable,  
 Arabs known in fable,  
 Now in the ~~chase~~ race.  
 Such are subjects in him;  
 Such will never win him  
 What they're really worth.  
 Just a few now own them  
 Cultured ones who've known them  
~~Known~~ <sup>loved</sup> them from their birth.  
 Loosing ~~here~~ <sup>here</sup> and finding —  
 Skilful, subtle binding —  
 Penetrates his work.  
 Misting in the painting,  
 Colour low and fainting,  
 Never bright or mink!

2 May 1916  
 (Vernishing day)  
 at the F.R.S.A.

\* Robert Alexander, RSA,  
 died in 1923.



# THE BLACK 'BIRD' OF SWANSTON

*To the Honble. Lord Guthrie, with a sketch of the same*

'SONGLESS Swanston spirit!—  
"Bird thou never wert"—  
What on earth's the merit  
In thy wooden heart,  
Propp'd on a curious cage of mediaeval art?'

## ANSWER

'Mute as wood and black as Hell,  
I'm the guardian of this bell;—  
Children rather hear its roar than  
Any sound within the dell;  
Night and day I do no more than  
Guard Lord Guthrie's dinner-bell.

'Maids who come and ring the bell  
Say I'm sad and never tell  
Why I never take to wing and  
Go back to my home in Hell,  
Why I'm tongueless and don't sing and  
Leave to them the dinner-bell.

'But to you I'll break the spell—  
Fate has fixed me to this bell.  
Can't they see I'm blind and legless?—  
How can I get back to Hell?  
To attempt it would be reckless.  
Now, my good sir, fare thee well!' ✱

9.4.16

23

*"That all softening  
never-powering knell—  
the loosing of the soul—  
the dinner-bell."*

*—Byron.*

*✱—this is a good example of how  
Shakespeare has got well on to  
our tongues. I am ashamed to say  
I never read a line of King Lear  
until to-day (28.1.35) and I  
happened to open the play at a  
page on which I almost at once  
read these words:  
'Now fare you well, good sir.'*



## ROOKS AND THE ORNITHOLOGIST



HO hasn't watched the rooks at morning fare,  
Where birds as well as men may reap a  
goodly share?

We've seen their black backs silver'd with  
the sun,

And clapp'd our hands and made 'em one  
by one

Spring up with graceful sweep into the  
skies—

Who says rooks don't exult in exercise?

Looping-the-loop is nothing to the ride

Of rooks that 'spire and coil and cut and glide

And tumble in the air'—nor acrobat

Nor battle-plane can play a game like that!

The farmer joys to see 'em in the air;

Upon the land his motto is 'Beware!'

But *where be* we without a corbie's caw—

Without a rookery?—He *disna* *kna*w

(And doesn't care either—ornitholo-  
gists are nought to him).

2.5.18

## NATURE'S ECONOMY

### WHITETHROATS AND WAGTAILS

WITH bluffing plumage and with agitated tail,  
He'd pluck the bristles from the pigs on which he'd  
sail; ✕

And when the Whitethroat's lined his nest, in joyous  
song

He'll trill his 'Lee-lee-lee-lee-lee' the whole day long,  
And boldly mock by night the Wood-owl's eerie wail.



## The Music of the Kingfisher

List to the twittering music -

Love songs to each other -  
Of the gay Kingfishers

Father bird and mother;  
Hear their guttural low notes  
When the wind is dying.

Watch them dipping, darling,  
Close together flying;

See them sometimes separate,  
One to crown a bramble

On the cliff above the river  
Where the children love to scramble,

The other's glorious plumage  
Glittering still below it

O'er the waters hallow'd

By the Dyshire Poet.

1910



\* Bloomfield, in his Spring, has written

"The sporting whitethroat, on some twig's end borne,  
Pour'd hymns to freedom and the rising-morn."

I think "twig's end" very ugly and, knowing the habits  
of the whitethroat, I would be inclined to parody it thus:-

The sporting whitethroat, on some pig's end borne,  
Pick'd bristles for his nest at early morn!

Light's effect <sup>upon</sup> flowers \*

~~The Effect of Light on Flowers \*~~



White and yellow give place to blue,  
And blue gives way to red;

And later a riot of colour sets in -  
Just look at your July bed!

1921

\* With the seasons flowers change their colour -  
white and yellow in early spring. "The rays of the  
February sun are not strong enough", it is thought "to  
supply the energy necessary for pigmentation. Without light  
there can be no colouration."



## The Soul's Rest

Bring me back to Nature,  
Give me boyhood's spells!  
Though in dreams I linger,  
Lead me to the Falls!

Clear, delicious gurgle  
Of many a birdie bobbing  
Through the golden bracken,  
And ready note of robin,  
Join the jubilant murmur —  
Whistle of wind in the beeches, —  
Sing in my ears without ceasing —  
Cling to me like the beeches!

Fragrant faint sea odour  
Wafted from the West  
Fill my widening nostrils —  
Bring my soul its rest!

1910

Lines written upon calling to mind the  
Falls of Westwoodland, where some of  
the happiest years of my life (early) were  
spent.

## The Irony of Fate

(Lines inscribed beneath one of my pictures)

Once a brilliant-chaser, of brilliant-huntress born;  
Next a hopeless hirling of his glory shorn;  
Now the hack of gipsies, turned out on the grass,  
Waiting for the sunset of his life to pass.

16.8.12

Published in Baily's Magazine  
January 1921



We've watched a pretty sight—a nimble wagtail close  
Beside a grazing sheep, which picked from off her nose  
The flies. Thus the feeder, freed from torment, gratis gave  
What fed on her as food to feed a bird so brave—  
A fellow sympathy between the two—who knows?

2.1.16

## MY GARDEN ROBIN



14.5.16

LAST night a low and meditative lay  
Broke on my ear when I was bent on  
pleasure—  
On pleasure, as I thought (it ended differ-  
ently).  
To listen long I did not choose to stay,  
But hurried on to meet a friend (?) at play.

And what's my garden robin's song to-day?  
His cheerful notes, so clear and confident—  
The very essence of his life and passion—  
Now come to hold me in their welcome sway,  
And hide the memory of an ass's bray!

## VOICES FROM THE FARMYARD

*To a young friend from the town*

WHAT are the sounds I've heard in May?—  
The disgustful yell of a cat by night;  
The piercing bray of an ass by day,  
The gobble-gobble of a turkey fight;  
The shock of a peacock's grating note,  
The clanking voice of the goose;  
The winning neigh of a nanny-goat,  
The yap of a dog let loose;

D



The quack on land  
 Of the ducks in a band,  
 The chattering drake  
 Coming over the lake ;  
 The clarion crow of the cocks,  
 The perpetual low of the ox ;  
 A short-horn ' *moo* '  
 And a horse's shoe,  
 The grunt of an old fat sow,  
 The bark of a bow-wow-wow ;  
 The ' ba-ba-ba ' of sheep in a pen,  
 The ' clock-clock-clock ' of a common hen ;  
 The ' coo-r-r-r-coo '  
 Of the gentle *doo*,  
 The twittering sound of the six-day chicks,  
 Echoing back from the barley-ricks :—  
 These are the sounds I've heard in May,  
 Some of the sounds you 'll hear to-day.

May-day 1915,  
 Old Farmhouse, Cramond Bridge.

## THE RUINED CORN-MILL



ONCE knew a mill on the banks of a brook,  
 Unglazed were its windows and bare were  
 its walls ;  
 But I loved the old mill with its desolate  
 look,  
 More precious to me than the gayest of  
 Halls.  
 No longer the wheel lashed out at the  
 water,  
 Where the wild things would come to  
 enhance it by day,  
 And grey were the bricks and green was  
 the mortar

That once was as pink and as white as the may.



# Sonnet

## LAMBS' TAILS

The cheeriest glimpse of Spring I yet have seen,  
When softly blew the west wind through the vale,  
Was a myriad hazel shoots of tender green  
Wagging their catkins, as a lamb its tail.  
And some of them I seized, leaving the ~~tail~~  
The ~~poor~~ <sup>poor</sup> for the dozen tails I took, —  
So did I love them that 'twas thought by me  
We'd live (or die!) together in a book.\*  
But distant still must be that book of rhyme,  
With no one's aid the further will it flee —  
The Publishers, at ~~best~~ <sup>best</sup>, are granting time!  
But time's not what I want — it's £ s d.  
Ah well, 'tis "better to have loved and lost"  
Than waste a penny on 'em through the post! §

10.2.15

\* I intended to take them home and sketch them for  
a border to some of my verses. This I did, and the  
drawing I made was one of my best.  
§ For twenty years past publishers have proved to be of no use  
to me, and yet from time to time I have kept nibbling at them.

### -My House

my house — my home, thou art my all;  
when thou art gone, then comes my fall.

1.4.16

Old Farmhouse  
(Ramond Bridge).



## The Hoopoe

To my two youngest boys

The crested Hoopoe comes from Hungary.  
A gaudy, but a dirty, bird is she,  
That rears her young in filth and 'odour foul,  
And teaches them the cry "Hup up!" to howl.

In bushes low she lives beside the wood,  
And feeds on what she deems is passing good. —  
The maggots from the droppings of the cow, —  
How she can eat 'em, no nice boy knows how!

I saw one once upon an ancient stump,  
And mark'd the crescent white below the rump,  
The rusty red, and mantle shining-black;  
And I hoped that Hoopoe might again come back.

But not since then have I set eyes on one,  
Though Kent knows well the Hoopoe's flight's not done.  
For centuries two a useful, welcome guest,  
Upupa Epops, never cease here to rest!

22.xii.15

'Twas there that Dragon Brodie knew the keys of every land,  
And how to cast in putty or in clay, —  
A piece of which the susak would clasp within his firmish hand, —  
And kept a blacksmith in his pay.

I published on p. 120 of my  
Stories and Curiosities of Edinburgh  
and neighbourhood — 1911

<sup>told little</sup> **Pig Luck!**  
They <sup>told</sup> me a pig brings luck,  
That a silver one makes a good mascot.  
Well, I'm not a believer in luck  
But I bought one and took it 'to Ascot.

I lost all my money, of course,  
Having put a few pounds on "Lord Nolan";  
And that was my luck with the horse —  
And the pig and the purse were both stolen!

Tropaeum  
8.8.22

x I am not and  
never was a  
betting man —  
this is some-  
else!  
Saf



The old mill was dusty no more with the meal  
When I watched, long ago, for the brown trout to rise—  
It was there where I lingered and fingered a reel,  
And there where I sometimes would land a surprise ;  
There too I shot mallard, and once bagged a bittern,  
And more than one snipe bowed down to my aim.  
—Ye may go with your rod and your gun over Britain,  
But nowhere as there will ye find sport the same.

22.2.16









## The Owl in the Ivy

An owl in the ivy was hooting last night  
Though he knew that a falcon was born for a bite;  
And here in the ivy was hiding this morn,  
And in hiding he thought he could never be born.

But the enemy's wisdom <sup>was</sup> wiser than owl's  
He knew the <sup>bird's</sup> ~~habitation~~ haunt ~~but~~ by his ominous howls;  
So into the ivy the falcon's bill dashed,  
And now all you see is an owl badly-mash'd!

So too with the hooter at home amongst men —  
Very brave when he thinks he is safe in his den;  
But there soon comes a time when he's cast on his croup,  
And he thinks <sup>about</sup> ~~about~~ <sup>nocht</sup> ~~about~~ but his final wind-up!

23. 2. 16  
old Farmhouse  
Cramond Bridge

## Sparrow-pie In October

To miniature sportsmen

O give him a chance till the end of <sup>September</sup> ~~the autumn~~ —  
Till he's pick'd up the grub and got-fat on the fly,  
For he not only feeds on the corn, just remember.  
Put him down, but wait till the right time is nigh,  
And the daintiest ~~eater~~ <sup>feeder</sup> will face Sparrow-pie.  
March 1916

## " Sanct Katharine's Oyly-well "

Some went to St. Katharine's well,  
That magical, wonderful well,  
To be rid of their bigness —  
Preternatural bigness —  
Their burden of beef —  
In the full belief  
They'd be quit of their sickness,  
And return as sound as a bell

[published in my  
Stories and Characters of Edinburgh  
and Neighbourhood — 1910]



## Regal Bones — A Reflection

Lo! where we tread to-day, where yesterday a  
countless flock had been,  
We see the ruthless spade unclot the bones of  
many a king and queen.

No man could delve within that sacred fauce, though  
cold the breast he owns  
Without a shudder at the awful thought of  
breaking regal bones!

Yet, soon the thought wears off; the man works on  
and labours by his brother:  
Kings may be kings, but one bone under earth's no  
better than another.

For dust we are, to dust we shall return, — some  
day we all must mix —  
And p'raps below we'll find 'King David's bone no  
sweeter than a Dick's!

8.8.16



## The Carved Stones of Ravelston

O Ravelston (poetic name), wrapt round  
thy ruin is as homely a tale as could be found.  
Not a history of bloodshed's thine, not a note of romance —  
As we learn from the scanty records through which we glance,  
But a story of quiet life, in centuries those  
of the Foulis's and Keiths, two families of high degree.

There the year before James the Sixth had died,  
The knot of a Foulis and a Bannatyne closer was tied.  
A dovecot, a tower, a fountain grotesque and old,  
A few carved stones with the letters still clear and bold,  
Are all that remain of a long lost day, when there rose  
In four years the Ravelston dykes and the Ravelston house.  
The initials of both, with sixteen twenty four,  
May be seen graven deeply in stone by the arms they bore  
In the old-world garden, graced with nothing that's new,  
And fenced with perennial walls of holly and yew.

Published on p. 45 of my  
Stories and Curiosities of Edinburgh  
and Neighbourhood — 1910

\* Foulis pronounced Fowls

Published in  
The Scottish Chronicle  
16th March 1923  
under "Penny Highway"



## THE BURNING QUESTION OF BOOKS \*

*'Still take advice; though counsels when they flye  
At random, sometimes hit most happily.'*

R. HERRICK.

WITH ne'er the slightest turn of spite or rage,  
But with his usual courtly grace,  
Thus Rosebery spoke at Bishopsgate,  
Upon the Glasgow burning question  
Of books, that led to so much prate :—  
'To free yourselves from rank congestion,  
You still should take my bold suggestion,—  
Yet, save the look of a dying deer  
No more pathetic sight is there  
Than the plaintive look  
Of a burning book.

'And while you watch its blackening foliage,  
You mark the margin of each page  
Curl gently over with a look  
Of sad reproach, ere it expires.  
But *still* you have the cast-off book,  
Since, so it seems, the hottest fires  
Cannot consume your bound-up quires—  
The margin's lost,  
The text's intact;  
You've still the book  
To counteract.'

8.11.11

\* 7.12.15—Four years after Lord Rosebery made his speech and I had written my rhyme, I came upon a passage in *The Book Hunter*, by John Hill Burton, alluding to this burning of books. "It was supposed to be consigned to his nature to have made a great bonfire of his collection of books before he left the world; but a little consideration showed such a feat to be impossible, for books may be burnt in detail by extraneous assistance, but it is a curious fact that, combustible as paper is, supposed to be, books would burn. If you doubt this, pitch that folio *Swammerdam* or *Puffendorf* into a good roasting fire, and mark the result."



## ‘BOOKS AND THE MAN’

*[Lines written after hearing Sir Gilbert Parker's address to the members  
of the Philosophical Institution, Edinburgh, November 1, 1912.]*

**I**MAGINE Ani's shade from Egypt,  
Great maker of that host  
Of maxims, by a railway-bookstall !  
Or peerless Chaucer's ghost  
A-wandering round Carnegie's dozens  
Of Libraries, where most  
Of the volumes seen are dead or dying,  
Save only those that cost  
The authors pen and ink and paper,  
To wit the trash—the post-  
Haste written rubbish of the novel—  
Spaced at the public cost !  
The rush, the swirl, the motor-movement  
Of this our modern life—  
Suggested by the very covers—  
Would cut them like a knife.  
They would not ‘bide a wee,’ but rather  
Set fire to every room,  
Letting the worthless contents frizzle ;  
Then—back to fill the tomb !

## BOOKS FOR LEARNING, NOT SHOW

**I**T is not books we're asked to see  
Well bound ‘doth make man better be’  
(As shown in yon old mansion doom'd to change  
Its hands), ne'er read ~~or~~ opened—oh, how strange !  
Ten volumes on one shelf  
Digested by myself,  
Although my own for but a year,  
Were worth ten thousand *seen* elsewhere.  
May wisdom from a few old tomes be mine—  
And blow the thousands at the home of Swine !

21.7.14



# The Guardian Angel of the Castle Rock

[Bring a prognosis, favourable to men of good taste,  
of the winter garden scheme for West Princes Street]

To Archibald Philip Primrose, Earl of Rosebery, K.G., K.T.

Edin's Castle is in danger! —  
Where's its Keeper? Where's its Ranger?  
Some would, to accentuate

The grim magnificence of rock,  
Place a glass-house, up to date,  
Close beside your classic block!

Grey by nature, black with age,  
Is the allowance of the sage;  
One will have it, it's a lily —  
Yes, "an incompar'ble lily" —  
Not so pure in tone as most —!

Though its height may be its boast —  
Blacken'd deep by "Puffing Billy".  
Let them never be so silly

As to plant this Winter garden  
Just to please the tasteless few,  
And a draper (beg his pardon —

Let us give him his full due —  
A Knight) who'd have it near the West end  
Which, we guess, for him 's the best end!

Where's its Keeper? Where's its Ranger?

Edin's Castle's out of danger —  
Men of taste are not forsaken,  
A welcome primrose saves their bacon!

You's the plant to put about it,  
You will live — we do not doubt it —  
A guardian of Auld Scotia's fame,  
And Rosebery is its other name.

9. 11. 14.  
Cramond Bridge



## Homeless Shelley

Shelley mused on the systems of faith and denial  
As the dying man looks at the measure'd phial  
Containing a mortal's draught when his heart  
Is not here — when he longs to depart  
From a homeless world to Eternity. —  
And what if he did? — he thought he could see.

7. 1. 14.

## Art's Grandest Use

Oh, for oblivion, oblivion! — forgetfulness  
of ourselves!

Who has it most — a monarch or a labouring  
man that drives?

The sight of a master's picture, whether wrought  
with a brush or a pen,

Takes us into a world of fancy or into our  
fellow men.

A man of the soil shares oblivion, with the  
blood running clear of his head;

The landscape is now before him, and to this  
he is often led.

So the Prince and the peasant are equal if of  
all ways only in one —

In the joy of themselves 'forgetting' when the  
work of the day is done.

22. 2. 14.

The Scots Thistle: — A Scotsman's choice in Flowerdom.

Had I the choice of all the flowers to plant,

A Scottish Thistle would I grow;

And this 'twixt it and me the covenant —

To increase ourselves and prick a foe.

I published in p. 151 of my  
Clones and Curiosities of Edinburgh  
and Neighbourhood — 1902.



## THE ARTISTS AND POETS OF MY CHOICE

**T**HE Artists I like best are these,  
 Who paint the essence of the things  
 They see—the spirit there,  
 Expressing Nature's show  
 Of wondrous detail as they please ;  
 Who love the mystic strings  
 Of Art, concealing care,  
 And let their skilful brushes go.

The Poets I like best are those  
 Who tell of happier days, of likes  
 Begotten by a smile ;  
 Or but a painless crown  
 Of easily endured woes—  
 Young, yielding, amorous spikes  
 That prick not wound the while—  
 The produce of a short-lived frown.

27.1.18

## A POET TO A PAINTER

**I**F I were you and you were me,  
 A painter would a poet be.  
 —‘And a poet a painter,’ murmured she.

Why mar thy life by searching after  
 The grain that others sow ?—  
 Why idly waste the precious, fleeting moments,  
 To let a few words flow  
 That friends may know  
 Thou 'rt poetless, and growing daft and dafter ?

31

\* Swinburne, in his Felice, writes  
 If you were I and I were you,  
 How could I love you, say ?  
 If he is correct, then I am wrong when I say,  
 If I were you and you were me,  
 A painter would a poet be.



Let poets pen their thoughts and passion,  
 When they are in request ;  
 But thou—cling tight to thy unrivalled calling ;  
 Do thou thy level best  
 To beat the rest,  
 Holding thine own by some resistless fashion.  
 Paint when the painting spirit moves thee,  
 Yea, whether it does or not,—  
 Thy worst result on canvas, sure, is better  
 Than this thy rhyming rot,  
 So soon forgot,—  
 Or thou mayst lose the friend who dearly loves thee.  
 Lend me the half of what thy sense  
 Must know of blending paint,  
 Such harmony in picture would I conjure  
 I'd then, sinner or saint,  
 By no constraint,  
 With painting *words* soon utterly dispense.  
 16.11.12

## A CHRISTMAS-CARD POET'S REFLECTION



ICE and snow in days of fire !—  
 In dreams of winter I perspire,  
 Singing for the Christmas trade  
 With eighty-something in the shade !  
 At my elbow blocks of ice—  
 Such to July poets are priceless ;  
 When these blocks depart I'm iceless.  
 Poems by me written twice—  
 Heaven help me ! three times twenty  
 All on Yule-tide—isn't it plenty ?  
 To *write* of snow seems nice and cool—  
*Thinking* so just shows the fool,—  
 And I'm the fool for wasting gravy,  
 Roasting here with never a slavey—



## A Poor Poet's Reflection

I thank the Lord for a moment's madness - madness! -  
Aye, more than I can tell;  
I thank the Lord for all this gladness - gladness! -  
It brings to my poor Bell.  
For when I'm mad I'm always writing, writing,  
Writing a line or two;  
And when I'm not I'm always fighting - fighting! -  
Aye, if you only knew.

Fighting for what? Why, bread and mutton  
And a share of a bed as well; -  
And if I wasn't not a button  
Would find me out, or Bell.  
Fighting with whom? Nigh everybody -  
Most whom I come across; -  
And if I wasn't I'd be a Tom-Noddy,\*  
~~making each~~ gain my loss.

27. 6. 14

Written in the train -  
Edinburgh to Barton.

Of Walter Crane

The feeling for beauty and truth  
The desire for artistic expression,  
Were Crane's from the budding of youth -  
Yea, were his by a lawful succession.

Impromptu - to an acquaintance

(His father was also  
an artist)

Don't know old Jan Deane,  
Who wrote the book we all should get  
Two hundred years ago? -  
By all the powers! he's not dead yet!  
Nov. 8, 1909.

\* A Tom-Noddy is a  
stupid, stupid fellow.  
Because I had a number of  
very stupid and some  
malicious people to contend  
with, I used to write  
and I would each Tom-Noddy  
would make my gain my loss.  
I have now  
lost my mind.



# Sour Milk Ghyll

The Rolka came galloping past the Church  
as fast as its legs could go,  
And when we had come to Easedale bridge  
"Churn Milk" was a sheet of snow.  
We paused to look at the mingling brooks  
which streak'd the whole of the vale -  
That valley of streamlets hurried along with  
the speed of driven hail;  
And the sound of ~~each~~ <sup>all</sup> ~~the~~ <sup>they</sup> boil'd, and hiss'd in ~~the~~ <sup>its</sup> bed;  
The Falls looked like a myriad isles, with a  
waterfall at ~~their~~ <sup>the</sup> head. - score of  
Such a scene I have dwelt on a ~~hundred~~ times,  
to thousands the same has appeal'd; -  
But to put it in ~~poet~~ ink in poetical prose,  
a Wordsworth was first in the field.

Published in the  
Foreword of Round  
Trailing - Past Present,  
written by me for  
The Westmorland  
Fazette in

1924,  
and which was  
published in  
brochure form  
as well as in  
the paper.

14. 5. 16  
[Rhyme written after reading a passage of seven lines  
in the Gosmore Journal (circa 1808) of Dorothy Wordsworth.  
It runs as follows: - "The river came galloping past-  
the church, as fast as it could go; and when we got  
into Easedale we saw Churn Milk Force, like a broad  
stream of snow at the little footbridge. We stopped to  
look at the company of rivers, which came hurrying down  
the vale, this way and that: a valley of streams and  
islands, with that great waterfall at the head, and lesser  
falls in different parts of the mountains coming down to  
these rivers. We could hear the sounds of the lesser  
falls, but could not see them."

Living at Gosmore at Allan Bank (her brother's  
residence - though not the same house - for some time), I was,  
over a space of a good many years, often & often face to face  
with this interesting and magnificent scene.]



None to shift the spit and save me  
 And spare the little wit God gave me.  
 Skimming down my ruby face  
 Drops of sweat together race,—  
 Shall I laugh, or shall I cry ?  
 Am I daft because I try  
 To dream of winter in July ?—  
 Come the real thing, or I die !

15.7.14

## WALTER CRANE

(b. 1845, d. 1915)

**D**ESIGNER, socialist, and poet,  
 He knew the use of leisure,  
 And knew that others too should know it—  
 If life's to be a pleasure.  
 No man must bear a *ceaseless* burden,—  
 No man he knew could do it ;  
 And Crane would see he got his guerdon,  
 Or may be *some* would rue it !  
 The motto that controlled his actions—  
 A pattern strong, not sabre—  
 He always told the heated factions  
 Would gain the day for Labour.  
 Enjoying comfort, peace and art,  
 That's how he lived to play his part.

## OF WALTER CRANE

**N**O platform agitator—one  
 Dissatisfied who howls revolt ;  
 But just a keen creator, one  
 Who sees the door and draws the bolt—  
 The door that leads to life's redress,  
 Hating what's 'born of idleness.'

15.3.15



## ROBERT BURNS

**H**E breathed his first breath in the winter,  
 When storms beset the place ;  
 His last departed in the summer,  
 With the sun upon his face.  
 A poet doomed to more than pleasure—  
 Ah, with the rose the rue !—  
 'Gainst odds that all but he would yield to  
 He fought his whole life through.  
 Better be born and live in poverty  
 And earn eternal fame,  
 Than live and thrive and die in luxury,  
 Leaving but just a name.  
 For wealth with idleness he spurns,  
 Who 'd emulate poor Robert Burns.  
 3.9.15

## ROBERT BURNS'S SMILE

**B**URNS seldom smiled when quite alone ;  
 And when occasionally he did ,  
 The smile—we know—was to postpone  
 The sad reflections which he hid :  
 His grief lay deep, yea, very deep,  
 Lay with him till the end ;  
 But he labour'd on, asham'd to weep,  
 Taking what God would send.

The smile he wore in company  
 Was oftener but a mask athwart  
 His face, to cover up what he  
 Was hiding in his swollen heart :—  
 An innate bravery made him bold,  
 Amidst a winning lively throng,  
 To cast his cares away untold  
 And lose himself in song. ✱

15.7.11

✱ " We rest. — A dream has power to poison sleep ;  
 We rise. — One wandering thought pollutes the day ;  
 We feel, conceive or reason, laugh or weep ;  
 Embrace fond woe, or cast our cares away : "

It needs a will to keep behind — Shelley  
 the screen of his chivalry good fellowship



# The Wine of Burns

Another Twenty-fifth is past -  
Another Burns's Day ; -  
No earthly fame will e'er outlast  
The power that in him lay.

The common life that God has made  
Burns could not pass it by -  
The interests that never fade,  
The loves that never die.

For the helpless and the poor he sigh'd,  
Loving their poetry ;  
The meanest thing he glorified  
To immortality.

By force of his poetic gift,  
On which his soul would ride,  
He gave the rustic folk a lift,  
Singing their honest-pride.

As good at-heart as great of soul,  
A radiant blade was he ;  
He loved the dance, he loved the bowl,  
He loved humanity.

Proud Scott and lordly Tennyson,  
And every poet since,  
Have sung or said there's barely one  
To beat your poet prince.

Our Burns is still the lion, still!  
The People's poet here ;  
Each one his noblest verses fill  
With love and goodly fear.

The vintage of his choicest grapes  
Will purge the world of sin, -  
'Twill turn the tyrant into sheep,  
And make "the whole world Kin".

26.1.12  
Craigville: Blackhall  
Midlothian



To be  
 Published in  
 The Health & Chromicle  
 1923  
 from sheet revised by me  
 Nov. 1922  
 published 20.4.23  
 J. H.

So graft the germ of literature  
on half-hours of your leisure, \*  
That books may be in days to come  
A source of constant pleasure.



## Snip and Stripes

ספ

\* I emphasise this word as "you" in your younger days (and some of you in your older days too) - may by bad horsemanships, give him a fall.



# SONNET

CARLYLE, IN A NUTSHELL, ON BURNS



S the hunter laughs when thorns run through  
his hide ;  
As the lion, shaking dewdrops from his  
mane, †  
Doth bound him forth victorious over  
them ;  
He too shakes sorrows gallantly aside.  
What stamps the man was seen in col-  
loquy ;—  
A generous valour and uncouth down-  
rightness,  
A pitying soul, domestic joy and bright-  
ness,

And—chiefest of them all—SINCERITY.

Laconic emphasis with modesty ;

Loud floods of mirth ; soft wailings of <sup>affection</sup> affliction :

These all were Burns's, with a calm reflection ;

So in his life, so in his poetry.

Than plodding Robert Burns—go where we can—

Where shall we find a better gifted man ?

January 1911

## A REPLY TO GORDON

'And I believe the devil's voice  
Sinks deeper in our ear  
Than any whisper sent from Heaven  
However sweet and clear.'

SAY not this, for if thou mean'st it  
Life for me is quite undone ;  
Say, the voice from Heaven is sweetest,  
Then for me my life may run.

10.1.16

\* Adam Lindsay Gordon, the 'poet-laureate' of Australia, who took away his own life with a revolver. rifle, on June 23rd 1870.

35

† C Sweet, rouse yourself ; and the weak wanton Cupid  
Shall from your neck unloose his amorous fold,  
And, like a dew-drop from the lion's mane,  
Be shook to air.

— Patroclus to Achilles, in Troilus  
and Cressida (Shaks).



SIR HENRY JAMES, O.M.

(b. 1843, d. 1916)

**H**E lived his life in a myriad books,  
This man of peace, of thoughtful looks :  
To court the crowd, as Browning would,  
Was not his wont—he never could,  
So loved he Tennysonian solitude.

29.2.16



*Critical Remarks From The Tomb, or, Algernon Swinburne commenting on an old lady's\* tribute to his memory.*

36

Sweet-personalia for dead men to hear!  
Full of bad taste and timidity.  
Swinburne can't love 'em, but Swinburne can swear —  
Hell! what a treat for posterity! —  
Shape of my hands and size of my feet;  
How often drunk, and what I could eat;  
Length of my trousers, cut of my coat,  
Taste in collar and tie,  
Favourite soap! — Darned old goat! —  
glad though you wait till we die.

1/22  
\* Mrs. Watts-Dunton

*Algernon Swinburne*



## A Northern Earl's Dream

He dream'd of his dungeon deep,  
Where the light never came to play  
Nor even a beam of it peep —  
Where darkness was night and day  
For his prisoner awake or asleep.

A prisoner's piteous howl,  
And the moan of the wailing billow  
With the scream of the wild sea-fowl,  
Were the sounds that came to his pillow  
To harrow the peace of his soul.

And he woke to the growl of a key  
Turn'd deep in a rusted lock;  
And the wildest bird of the sea,  
As it shriek'd o'er the castle rock,  
Was sweet by the side of that key. —

And this was the only sound  
For the prisoner ever to hear,  
When the warder was on his round  
To see that he still was there  
Fetter'd and fix'd to the ground.

— The Prince of the Orkneys left from his bed  
With an oath that he'd hang him till he was dead:  
And he closed up that dungeon wi' mortar an' stone  
So he never should dream of it — never again.

[This was published in my  
Stories & Curiosities of  
Edinburgh & Neighbourhood, pt. iii,  
1911.]



The Ghosts of Flodden, or  
The Ninth Day of September

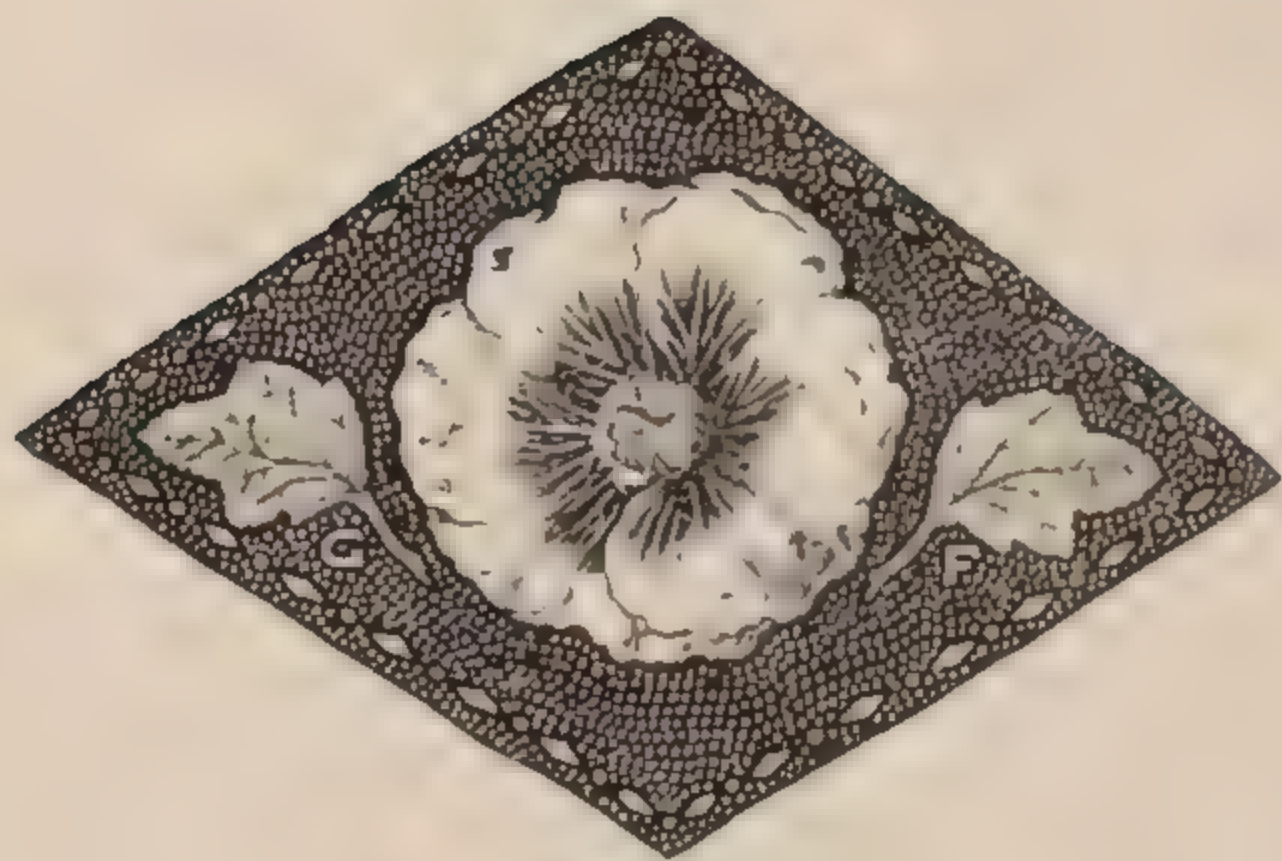
Since famous Flodden Field was cross'd by  
two huge martial hosts  
The land round Branxton Moor 's been haunted  
by a band of warrior ghosts;  
You can hear them all re-echo what—  
England 's not forgot—  
The pain of the joyful victor and the dirge of  
vanquish'd Scot.  
'Twas there the flower of Scottish chivalry sprang  
up to meet the foe  
'Twas there it fought and 'fell as bravely  
for all the world to know;  
'Twas there a King of Scotia fell:— Ah! well may  
Scots remember  
Their one great day of national mourning—  
THE NINTH DAY OF SEPTEMBER!  
But if Flodden struck the harshest note  
of discord 'twixt the foes,  
'Twas but the prelude to the blinding of  
the Thistle and the Rose;  
And the true-born, honest, loving Scot—  
Whatever men may say—  
Has now no bitterness to mingle with  
the memory of that day.  
Yet the warrior ghosts can still be heard  
around yon Flodden ridge  
Where James drew up to meet the Southrons  
above the Twizel Bridge;  
And there they'll howl and yell for aye, <sup>so</sup> that  
we shall all remember  
That one great day of national mourning—  
THE NINTH DAY OF SEPTEMBER!

1910  
Craigville  
Blackhall  
Midlothian



( This poem—"A page of decorated manuscript"—  
was hung on the lines at the Royal Scottish Academy in 1907. )







## DETOUR OF AN ASS DOWN CRAIGIE HALL GLEN



HURRYING moon, once bright, is now  
veil'd o'er  
By darkening clouds ; a south-west wind  
has risen,  
And augurs badly for the night. . . .  
Only a mile to go, but such a mile  
On such a wild, dark night in such a  
drear  
And dangerous spot ! Companionless, I  
step  
Ahead, and down a winding drive between  
Some agèd beech-trees bending from the  
blast,

Until I reach the bridge that crowns the Glen.  
And here I stand. The storm is at its height.  
Can I in after years forget these sounds ?—  
Loud murmur from a thousand swaying trees,  
A deafening roar of rushing waters hurled  
Beneath the bridge, the crash of riven boughs,  
The spattering rain upon the sullen rock !  
Pitch-dark the night, save for a flash of light<sup>ning</sup>  
That now and then illuminates the path,  
And each flash followed by a peal of thunder,—  
The very bridge of whinstone seems to rock ;  
But 'tis the bridge of *Hope*\*—and not of 'sighs,'  
So 'forrad on' ! I press me down the Glen,  
What seems, forsooth, a fathomless abyss—  
Oh for a pilot, one to cheer me on !  
Flash after flash of light<sup>ning</sup>, peal on peal  
Of thunder—Crash ! a bough falls at my feet,  
Missing by one hair's breadth the only hope  
I have of bread—my pan of brains with which  
To earn it. Gad ! what's that ? I'm up against

\* Erected by the Hon. Charles Hope-Weir in 1757.

*"Committed to the darkness and the gloom"—  
Down, down, uncertain to what ghastly fate—*



## - My Old Student Days

The voice of the past is speaking again:—  
I am young, I am rich, and have leisure;  
No cares, no anxieties to worry the brain,  
and 'little to think of but pleasure.'

The shadows of all the sweet years that have been  
on a canvas move swiftly before me;  
And each detail seems etched on a visionary screen,  
So's to blot out the days that were gloomy—  
And stormy the were the dark days of my past,  
They drift through this loom with the sorrow  
To leave me crestfallen all day while they last—  
Though I leave 'em behind on the morrow.

But the sweetness—the honey—the long-enjoyed clover  
Of old comrades, old times, and old ways  
Is beside me once more—and I love to pore over  
The best of my old 'student days'.

And what were the best of my days as a student—  
Untrammelled by Dean or Tutor?  
Were they never /ways other than straight-laced and prudent?  
Perhaps not, but they passed smoothly on.

Was it football or cricket or rowing that held me  
Entranced for a while with its charms?  
No, the Powderhall runners and jumpers impelled me  
To couple myself to their arms:

Timber-topping and long jump and cross-country running\*  
Were the pastimes nearest my heart;  
Of the gentler pursuits (please, excuse me for punning)  
There were none that were nearer than art. §

I attended in turn, under no sort of pressure,  
Each class as a matter of course—  
They were neither a bore nor a pleasure,  
Which I write without any remorse.

\* The writer was one of the three undergraduates to get on  
foot the Edinburgh University Harrow and Hounds, and was  
their first vice-captain. He was also one of the Athletic  
team selected to compete against the London United  
Hospitals, in June 1891; and in the same year was runner-up  
in the long jump at the Scottish Championships Meeting, held  
at Queen's Park, Glasgow.  
§ Before he graduated, in 1895, the writer had published his first of twenty books,  
viz. A Riding Retrospect.



## Triumphant We

And all the heaven was all one rose,  
And we forgot the frost and snows,  
And how the blustering-north wind blows;

So full of thankfulness were we  
That glorious canopy to see, —  
That bitter killed by sweet should be.

24. 4. 23

Published in  
The Scottish Chronicle  
Apr. 25. 1924

The Sunday dinner and tea of a young huddeman (aged 8)

Just tea an' bread an' a bit o' a bool, <sup>\*</sup> (~~bully beef~~),  
A plate an' a knife an' a fork an' a stool.

A round cream-cake an' five buddies <sup>§</sup> to tea  
An' plenty o' scones, wi' butter for me — (the others eat  
margarine).

13. 6. 2.

\* "bully beef" — tinned meat.  
§ buddies — friends.

## In the Grotto — Craigie Hall

In antique grottoes, roof'd with elan and yew,  
Where all, save song of bird, was lone and still;  
Where rhododendrons and pinks grow,  
Besprinkl'd every-morn with silvery dew;  
And where the blue-bell and the daffodil  
Would raise their heads to greet the rising sun,  
Full on the bank 'neath which the waters run;  
There have I sketch'd, and there my laurels won, <sup>\*</sup>  
Drinking the while of Nature's charm my fill.

30. 5. 15

\* It was here I sketched some of the material  
(pinks floribunda) for my best design up to  
date — "Brood-mares at the Dove well" (a  
pen-drawing which I sold to Colonel W. Hall  
Walker, now Lord Wavertree, for 20 guineas —  
a particularly large sum for just a pen-drawing  
without the copyright. — In 1905 Lord Barnard of  
Raby Castle, gave me £25 for my St. Cuthbert's Church  
and about the same time my Darlington Political cartoon  
was purchased for £35; both were pen-drawings.)



Some giant pile of stone and mortar—no,  
 It's just another bit of honest *Hope*—  
 An empty pedestal to beautify  
 The Glen—and nearly knock a man's skull in !  
 And now I'm off my feet a-rolling down  
 The bank to be with Venus—where she was,  
 I mean, for here's another empty stand.  
 But I am on my feet once more—oh, damn !  
 It's this time knee-deep in the old mill-race—  
 When *shall* I see the end of this abyss ?  
 Another flash of light, and I am up  
 The bank and on the track. Another peal  
 Of thunder—Hell ! I'm in the race again,  
 Upon the other side, head first this go,  
 And dank and foul that dip ! But here !—what's this ?  
 A something soft and woolly—Lord ! it moves,  
 It kicks !—my shin ! Another flash of light—  
 Oh, ears !—it's you, good Ladas—Alec's friend,  
 And mine. And now I know this Glen is *not*  
 So fathomless as first I thought, home's close  
 At hand. And had I stuck to yon hard road  
 I'd never got a ducking deep, nor met  
 An ass—nor been one !

8.2.14

## THE HOLLY HEDGE, CRAIGIE HALL.

**T**HESE hollies with the wall a form  
 As of an arbour take,  
 A long low bower of evergreen,  
 Through which a thousand folk have been  
 To note its curious make.

'Twas in this secret holly bower,  
 Five miles from 'Enbro toun,'  
 The happy thought on a Sunday morn  
 Of sketching Craigie Hall was born  
 One lovely day in June.



'The better the day, the better the deed';  
 I left the arbour's shade  
 To find a spot whereon to stand  
 And limn the 'pearl' of this fair land,—  
 And here's the sketch I made.

20.6.13.

## SONNET

### CRAIGIE HALL GLEN

*To the Memory of the Hon. Charles Hope-Weir, F.R.S.*



LONG as the path we tread is grown with  
 grass,  
 Long as the trees are there for us to pass  
 And perk-ear'd squirrels wave on high their  
 brushes  
 And through a myriad leaves the coney  
 rushes;  
 Long as the evening sun can tinge yon  
 russet glade  
 With streaks of gold to illumine the purple  
 shade;  
 Long as the rustic bridge, o'ergrown with  
 fern and moss,

Stands strong below the falls for us to cross,  
 And gives us from on high that crowning view  
 Of the grot, deep in its nest of elm and yew,  
 There'll always be a thankful few to praise  
 The name of one\* who made the Glen his care,—  
 Not only for his own grey-headed days,  
 But all who are indulged to wander there.

June 1913

\* The Hon. Charles Hope-Weir (Vere), <sup>third</sup> second son of the first Earl of Hopetoun, who  
 laid out the grounds and planted trees all over the estate between the years 1730 and 1790.  
 Lord Rosebery now owns Craigie Hall.



# Almond Oil

O Almond, poisonous, oily stream,  
Where is thy "limpid look"?  
But pictur'd in my Crayon's dream  
And in a Crayon book!

Beauty thou hast upon each bank,  
Thou still canst race and boil;  
But thou hast lost the premier rank —  
Thy bed, it reeks with oil!

I would not rob thee of thy fame —  
I loved thee well of yore;  
To me thou'lt ever be the same,  
I'll love thee more and more!

New Year's Day  
1914



## The Hope-Weir Bridge — During a flood.

The Niagara-like ~~rush~~ <sup>rush</sup> of the river above,  
In front of the walls of the old fort's home;  
The whirlpool of froth in the hollow below;  
The swirl of the torrent, the swish of the foam;  
The dance and the fling of the water beyond  
As they clash with the rock at the point of the ridge;  
Are sights for the stranger (whose senses respond)  
To make him remember the Hope-Weir bridge.

11. 12. 15

Ex tempore lines run off  
while I was sketching the  
scene from the old rustic  
bridge (dated 1750)





Cont. from p. 38.

But dissecting I loved as I loved its Professor,\*  
An anatomist born, and a man  
Who will s'er hold his own with any successor —  
Yea, find me a better who can.

Could I ever forget too the words of a writer §  
Of a good little book, Looking Back?  
Than our friend "Honest John" not a surgeon stood mightier  
In the eyes of his clinical pack.

¶ <sup>with him</sup> 'Twas ~~then~~ once I worked with the zeal of a fool,  
When I came to be instrument-clerk,  
And prepared for my Chief at an "Op" every morn —  
Save the saw, which I left in the dark!

Some had seen the mistake — I could see by their faces —  
And were shuffling their feet with a vengeance;  
I deserted my post at the leg and made paces  
Upstairs with the speed of two engines  
And grabbed at the saw in its cupboard and forthwith  
Flew back — just in time — before Chiene  
Put a hand to the tray for the weapon to saw with —  
And think it aptly clean!

When older I grew — and must I add, idler? —  
I purchased a horse, and then more;  
And by 'Varsity friends' I was voted a sidler  
For keeping a stable and four.

Yet I rode and I hunted in spite of the saying —  
Th' unclutterlike deed it was done.  
And I zealously entered that best form of 'playing'  
To enjoy a few seasons of fun.

But, to bring a long story short, I went back to  
My books and my patients of yore,  
Still preferring at heart a good huntsman and pack to  
A "Prof" and his medical lore.

I got my degree<sup>x</sup> — and by painstaking ways —  
Though I won it not quite in a canter!  
And this is the tale of my old student days  
Which I willingly leave you to banter.

S. X. 11

Craigville: Blackhall.

(Published in The Student, Xmas number 1911)

\* Sir William Turner, KCB, FRS LL.D DCL, etc, afterward Principal of  
Edinburgh University.

§ Professor John Chiene, FRCSEd, C.B, etc

¶ The writer was a member of the Linlithgow and Stirlingshire Foxhounds  
1892-3, and also a subscriber to the famous Pychley Hunt 1896-97,  
hunts n. 'two days a week with those hounds when in practice at Hillmorton',  
no Rugby, and also odd (or 15) days with the N. Warwickshire & Atherstone.  
x At the special graduation ceremony, Oct 1895.











Two Minors quarrel over a Sheep's Head  
Each swore by his own 'lic'lar taste, and each boasted  
that his way of cooking's the best one;  
One wanted it boiled, and the other one roasted;  
So they wrestle to settle the question.

1901  
(For my design, see A North Country Album)



## A CURE FOR INFLUENZA

*To Charles H. Backhouse, Esq.*

**M**Y excuse  
For not writing to thank  
For the goose  
Is—to tell you point blank—  
Influenza.

I'm in bed,  
With strong pills being cramm'd,  
Nearly dead  
With bronchitis and damn'd  
Influenza.

Many thanks  
For that goose, and, be sure,  
Many thanks  
From us all—it might cure  
Influenza.

December 1907

## TO AN APRIL MIDGE

**T**HE up-and-down movement of midges,  
Like so many puppets at play,  
'Neath the arches of both Cramond Bridges  
Is an omen that brings a good day.  
Then, bravo! ye dipterous fighter—  
Ye brave little miniature gnat,  
I forgive ye for being a big biter  
And take off my hat.

The cold that has frosted the arches,  
The winds that have blown o'er each bridge  
In the worst of all miserable Marchs  
Are worse than the nip of a midge!



## Crabs, Fleas & Jelly-fish

Come, see the crabs go scrambling on  
or swimming in the pools,

The water-flea and the jelly-fish,  
Each one with fighting tools:

Each one with weapons of attack  
And weapons of defence —

A claw, a looth, a tail, a sting,  
and, best of all — its sense.

Watch how each fights for self and mate,  
and seeks his food by rules;

and think upon yourself and me —

How we sometimes are fools! \*

\* "A fool is one who doesn't use the  
sense he's got" (E. Thring)

To —

together with an ebony hair-brush, packed in  
a large pudding-basin, and these lines on the label:—

Not a pudding for mother to boil it,

Not a pot of preserve — not a feast;

But a useful thing for your toilet;—  
White bristles in wood from the East.

Receive it to brush away sorrow —

The dandruff of all the past days —

and bring you to-day and to-morrow

New life and new ways.

Xmas-day  
1914

At

~~concerning~~ a Side-show in <sup>Country</sup> at a Fair

I paid a penny once

(Perhaps you never heard)

To touch a twin exuberance

And pull a lady's beard!

11. 6. 20

## "A Silver Lining"

To the Rev<sup>d</sup> Alfred Griffiths, M.A. Camb.,  
together with a water-colour sketch by me  
of a beautiful cloud tipped with silver.

Oh have I bless'd my cheerless days, though bow'd  
with want and care; and - never sped a cloud  
that left me still repining.

And had I never known a passing cloud,  
I had not hugg'd the heartfelt joy that flow'd  
From the sight of a silver lining.

1912  
Craigville  
Blackhall  
Midlothian

Published  
in The Scottish Chronicle  
April 7, 1923  
Prof's list revised  
by me Nov. 1922

The gold and the red of November —  
~~that~~ <sup>the</sup> blaze of the elm and the birch —  
Are things that make ~~me~~ <sup>us</sup> remember  
There's beauty beyond our reach,  
A beauty we're told exceeding  
The ken of the wisest man; —  
But the love for a world exceeding  
Assists us in passing the span.

11.11.13  
Craigie Hall Glen  
Linkithgowshire

## Labour at Labour

If we build a house we're bound to sweep it —  
We've made our bed where we must lie:  
If we scatter grain we've got to reap it,  
And if we don't we know <sup>we</sup> ~~we~~ die.

Questionable Advice for <sup>a hot</sup> June,  
And a Rambler's way of looking at it.

The advice some doctors throw to Bills and Belkies —  
"Keep cool, and live on juices of lemons and lettuce" —  
Is cautious counsel which they don't admire —  
They'd sooner eat their fill and then perspire!

23.6.20



O merciless insect, I love ye  
 And bless the return of your bite!—  
 I now know the blue sky's above me  
 And feel the sun's might.

15.4.16

## THE LAUGH<sup>†</sup>

**A**SILLY titter and a thoughtless giggle,  
 A short dry laugh and fiendish sniggle,  
 Are what we most detest.

Some laughs are loud—smiles may be sweeter;  
 Some laughs are low, seeming discreeter;  
 Yet, both may bring us rest.

But a <sup>genuine</sup> hearty roar of <sup>heart's</sup> genuine children's laughter,  
 Bringing good fellowship thereafter,  
 Is what we like the best.

29.2.12

## THE JOY OF LIFE \*

**M**UCH work that's hard and true, man;  
 Some play that's fringed with sense;  
 The love of one good woman—  
 And the joy of life's immense.

18.1.16

## THE ORANGE PIG

*To my first-born*

**A**N orange, knived with brain,  
 I use in pig-creating,  
 When I feel partic'lar sane—  
 Which I'm not ashamed for stating,  
 As it gives the pig no pain.

43

\* a cruel parody on this, by myself too! —  
 much play; of work a trimming  
 (No man shall be my censor);  
 the love of six young women —  
 and the joy of life's immensar!

4.11.16

† "a smile is a gesture of friendliness; a laugh,  
 a force amongst opponents," — but is dependent upon the kind of laugh.  
 29.4.33

Here is an orange boar—  
 The earliest I remember,  
 The first you<sup>\*</sup> ever saw,  
 When you met me in December  
 With a Fothergillian roar.

A boar without the beans,  
 A clever notion taken  
 From my father in my teens,  
 Who had made such orange bacon  
 For all his thirteen weans.

Who first saw pigs in fruit—  
 The fruit they spurn to gather?  
 The one who was so cute  
 Was your good great-grandfather—  
 Thank God! he made 'em mute;—

Grandsire and sire and I  
 Have carved as many porkers  
 As squeak beneath the sky;  
 So—what with other talkers—  
 They *might* have made me die!

11.5.13

*To David W. Gunn, Breeder of the famous 'Craigcrook Kings.'*

**I** CAN beat you hollow at breeding a pig,—  
 Believe me or not—I don't care a fig:  
 I can bring forth a sow in the space of a minute,  
 As like to your own as donkey and jennet,  
 With long head and long ears and a tail with a curl,  
 The envy of every man, woman and girl.

The best of my pig is, it hasn't a tummy—  
 It never needs feeding—it's only a dummy.  
 Only give me an orange, and I'll make you a pair  
 That'll pay you to show—they go free of fare.

31.5.13

44

*The Past and the Present*  
 \* To IZZA, in Toronto.

"Give me a pencil, Daddy — do;  
 I want to draw a horse like you."

Ah! that to me brings back the day  
 When Art and Love held equal sway —  
 When thou once loved'st to be <sup>by</sup> with me,  
 And I was happiest when with <sup>thee</sup> there.  
 But twenty years have brought a change, —  
 Thy love has sought a wider range;  
 Thou lov'st not now to be <sup>by</sup> with me,  
 As I'd love still to be <sup>by</sup> with thee.

20.3.21



## A Parson & his "Dear Friends"

Loving warmly, deeply hating, each in turn  
as suits him best  
That's the man that he was when he wish'd  
to be a parish priest.

One day loved, the next-day hated, by all  
who see him in the street; —  
Just a bit-for-tat, you'd say, then —  
parallel lines that never meet.

8. 12. 13

## To Eva

(with some trifling <sup>Xmas</sup> gifts — two "orange" pigs and  
several miniature "old masters" — for my little niece  
Barbara.)

I can send not a book for her reading,  
Nor a hat, nor a doll, nor a frock,  
But these pigs of my very own breeding  
To add to her miniature stock;

And with them enclosed for her doll's house —  
For the dining-room, nursery or hall —  
(which once, so they tell me, was Moll's house)  
Two paintings to hang on the wall.

For the love of old times in December —  
Which stick to me tighter than glue —  
Accept them, and mind you remember  
We shall think of the rest of you too.

8. 12. 13

## Impromptu

"Flocks, flocks, beautiful flocks!"

Scampering over the Campbelltown rocks,

Give me your wool for a pair of new socks!

[A certain parson of a very conceited nature, and with much affectation,  
who preached at a church I was attending bored the congregation  
terribly by the constant repetition of "Flocks, flocks, beautiful flocks,"  
and prompted this rhyme — I wanted a new pair badly.]

At Breakfast  
Impromptu - ~~Don't Be Inquisitive!~~

I'm warming my hands on my plate, -  
They're now in a very cold state,  
How long they'll be so I cannot yet date.

25.10.14

### A Be-Quick Pickwick Sale

Close to Sotheby's a friend, with these words, was my driver:-

"Come along. - here's a chance for you - be quick!"...

"Going, gone!" - five hundred pounds less a fiver  
For the perfectest copy of Pickwick!

26.5.14

\*  
[on the 15th June 1921  
at Sotheby's Rooms  
"the first-issues of the  
original parts of the  
'Pickwick Papers' with  
wrappers and advertisements  
complete, and in perfect  
condition" were  
sold for £910  
to a Philadelphian]

[For £495 Mr Robson (with Mr Quariter  
underbidder) at the disposal of Capt. R. H. Douglas's  
library bought the most perfect copy known  
of Pickwick, 26.5.14] \*

### Impromptu - The Boat of Hope

In the boat of Hope I'm sailing,  
Grandly struggling, grandly failing! -

13.2.12

(Mr Hope's boat  
had a hole in the  
bottom of it)

### A Memory of old Uppingham

And still we can recall that house  
Where smiled the bright-eyed Polly Moad,  
For past her door three times each day  
The tide of school-life ebbed and flowed.

Sometimes we'd stop and speak to her,  
But oftener we would pass her by,  
And she would wave and wave us out  
Of sight, and then - turn in and sigh.

3.1.15



## OUR TEA-POT STAND

*Impromptu to the Rev. A. G—*

**O**UR teapot stand of ancient pot—  
His Satanic Majesty in blue !  
The tea sits there to keep him hot  
And give the Devil his due !

30.1.14

## IMPROMPTU

A NORTH BERWICK FRAGMENT

**W**HAT strikes me most here, is—  
The blueness of the sea,  
The scarcity of tree,  
The whiteness of the Bass,  
The blackness of the Law,  
The greenness of the grass  
And the caddies skreighin' 'Fore !'  
12 a.m., 30.6.14

## THE OLD FAMILY PEW IN THE GALLERY ("The Laird's Loft" — "an commodious seat i' the Kirk")

**I**'D rather it than any new,  
What though they say I sin—  
A grand old pew, that upper pew  
Of yours, to slumber in !

When caustic minister sets forth  
Our duties for the day,  
And curses us for all he's worth—  
I'd rather sleep than pray !  
10.10.15

## IMPROMPTU

*To a wee cupboard thief*

THE scone is gone,—  
I wanted one ;  
And now I'm done,  
You naughty 'un !

19.2.16

## HEAVEN THE HAPPIEST HOME

*[Spoken impromptu, and in play, to my wife on my forty-sixth birthday]*

AT Forty-six I kick the pricks  
Of never-ending woes ;  
At Forty-seven I hope in heaven  
To find me on my toes ;  
At Forty-eight—if not too late !—  
I'll send 'em down for you ;  
At Forty-nine, without a whine  
We'll live on rose—*not* rue !

13.5.14

## IMPROMPTU

*Whispered in a friend's ear in Church*

THAT man there deep in prayer divine  
Last night was deep in whisky—  
One day in holiness he'd shine,  
Another sees him frisky !

46

\* I have known not a few men, and a few women too, of this sort ; but I cannot recall anyone drunk in Church, though of course chronic heavy-drinkers are never free from its influence and therefore semi-drunk when they sit in Church. The following shows us, however, that "there is nothing new :—"  
"Drunk in Church" (a heading in the Daily Sketch of Tues. Feb. 16, 1926). For creating a disturbance during Divine Service at Kintore Church, George Reid, labourer, "Kimray", was fined £5 yesterday at Aberdeen. Reid, who was drunk, shouted that the minister was no use, and also threatened violence to two elders.



## Riches And Art

Princely patrons\* loves not waiting : -  
Works of art must rise through  
The touch of a magic wand.

Artists know that their creating  
Means much time, and creeps through  
But a human hand.

## Ex Tempore

Give tooth for tooth and love for love, with fear for fear,  
But never wealth breathe in a lover's ear;  
For "riches cannot pay for tooth or love", - my dear.

15. 6. 14

Impromptu -

## Trust No Weather

Trust no weather however tempting,  
Take a covering on your arm,  
Or a great cloud - may be emptying  
All its contents to your harm!

2. 10. 12

N. Queensferry to  
Limekilns

---

\* George Gronau, in his Leonardo de Vinci,  
has written : - " Princely patrons do not  
like waiting. They would like to see works  
of art rise as from the touch of a wizard's  
hands. Just in this point lies so often the  
cause of disputes between the Masernas and the  
artist."

---

Impromptu

To the Rev. A. G. — MA, Camb.

Trust me, should I find those

Are willing to be friends

Whom I had "fancied foes,

I'll quickly - make amends.

10. 2. 07

Published in  
The Scottish Chronicle

## Betsy and the Bobby

Not a second she stay'd after Balder was paid,  
But was off out-o'-doors with a bound -  
Like a mite from a chaise she left in the barge  
To land on all fours on the ground  
Bowling over the Bobby who'd made it his hobby  
To stand in the door of that shop.  
She gave as her reason, "There's too many fleas on  
The heads of your boys - such a crop!"

"I'll take you in charge though you aren't very large,"  
The Bobby bawl'd out to the lassie.  
"Oh, we know wot you're like - I'm off on my byke -  
You're full of good food and too fassy."  
With that she was off and left him to cough  
In the doorway of Balder the grocer,  
With the thought in his mind she wasn't so blind -  
She'd given him a regular possie!

15. 12. 13



To A Friend

prefacing an invitation (somewhat late in the day)  
to supper.

"Now the day is over,  
Night is drawing nigh" -  
Whisky has a meaning  
So has pigeon-pie!

- Mrs Kelly ~~lament~~ ~~Zogie~~ Keeps Up

"Ah'm itchin' aul ~~an~~ <sup>ma</sup> ~~an~~ <sup>my</sup> body's that queer;  
Finah hadna' the spirit;  
Ah wadna' be here!"

1917

no Newbridge

~~Windsor~~  
Midlothian

[Robert Burns said,  
"An' were na' my heart-light, I wad dee",  
or was it Lady Grizel Baillie who sung that?] ]



## TOM HOOD'S PEN

WHERE have we found a sharper pen,  
So full of fun and feeling?  
It never opens far the flesh  
Unless it leaves it healing:  
A varied pen to give us grief,  
With gladness coming after,—  
For when it drains our fount of tears  
It touches springs of laughter.\*

27.4.16

## TO JESSIE

SO the news of to-day is:—  
Poor little Johnny has been in the wars,  
Twice he has felt the tingling tawse,  
For not knowing his French—not for breaking the laws.  
All I can say is,  
I'd rather be told of his tingle of tawse  
Than hear he felt worse—a kick out of doors!  
February 1913

## BIRCH V. TAWSE

*'As the twig is bent, the tree is inclined'*

AS the twig was bent on the boy's behind  
An impression was made on his naughty mind, —  
Referring to Theodore Hacking.  
And never so well was the imprint felt,  
As when over the back of a chair he knelt  
To the tune of a birch-rod whacking.

\* Douglas Jerrold, a kindred spirit, said of Thomas Hood: 'His various pen touched alike the springs of laughter and the sources of tears.'

47

— more than 14 years after I wrote these lines  
about the birch I read a Limerick in John  
O'London's Weekly (14.12.35) which runs as follows:—

"A modern schoolmaster of Oldham  
Was unwilling to flog boys or scold them,  
For he said: "I thought my art  
Is to make the boys smart  
One should start at the top and 'thunder' them!"

The writer of the Limerick doesn't tell us the nature  
of his "art" or to make a boy smart—in the region of his  
head—was it some form of magic, or a box of  
arts, or some other facial form? I still  
bark my teeth on the bottom against an "art"—this  
"modern schoolmaster." It was curious that I had collected—

(the word "Oldham" only was  
the "complicated" Limerick of a  
was in the region of the head  
There is more, and the schoolmaster  
old schoolmaster (such a schoolmaster)  
Till he took down to others and sold them!

The tawse is no teacher, if hands are awake—  
 Hands will generally take what the beam-end won't take  
 Without e'en a wince or a wriggle ;  
 And all the impression you 've made on the lamb,  
 Is the feeling at most that he don't care a damn  
 To the tune of his schoolfellows' giggle.  
 26.2.17

## THE ROD V. EXPULSION

TAKE fiction or take fact,  
 Results are just the same :  
 The boy who once was whack'd  
 Is still prepared for fame.

We never knew a whacking  
 Do worse than make him lame ;  
 But we 've heard of many a sacking  
 That robb'd a boy of fame.  
 30.1.16

## A MEMORY OF EDWARD THRING

(HEADMASTER OF UPPINGHAM 1853-1887)

THOUGH Thring could use the rod,\* he was not thought unkind :  
 Its shock surpassed a double-base untuned ;  
 And yet the memory which it ever left behind  
 'S 'a sovereign febrifuge' to heal the wound.  
 2.1.16

\* Every O.U. who had felt 'Teddy's' touch in this way, and yet who loved him, as I loved him and continue to love his memory, will know that what I have written here is true—the mind *must* be set at rest, if even for only a few moments, when it recalls the greatest disciplinarian of the nineteenth century and feels it was ruled by him.





Inscribed in a copy of Gainsborough

To a young lady called IZZA,  
As fond of trimming hats  
As giving gentle (?) pats  
And singing sharps and flats,  
A lover of little boats  
And cheerful, childish chats,  
Who never eats her fats,  
A keeper of Cranium cats  
Who wish'd for a pair of spats  
To hide her feet from the rats,  
Who's sure to tell us, "that's  
A piece of Cranium nonsense!"

Xmas 1913  
Old Farmhouse  
Cranford Bridge

from an affectionate Daddy

### The Rosslyn Knight

(A parody on Annie Laurie)

He's left wi' but ane z'z-ba',  
yon Rosslyn knichty man,  
He's jimp aboot the middle  
His waist ye wad may span;  
His waist ye ~~wad~~ <sup>wad</sup> may span,  
An' he has a tollin' z'z,  
An' for love o' Scots and Scotland  
He focht till he did dee.

He's lang sin' been at Rosslyn,  
whar he in death was lain,  
An' noo he's dust in armour  
Beneath a graven stane;  
Beneath a graven stane,  
An' ne'er forget will we  
That a Saint Claire focht at Flodden,  
An' for Kinton's sake did dee.

3.2.12

Published in The Weekly Scotsman  
of this date. His portrait by me  
was published on the cover of my  
Stones & Curiosities of Edinburgh & Neighbourhood (1911).



## IMPROMPTU

### JOB'S DAUGHTERS

**W**E 'VE looked for beauty, and wanted 'em sound,  
And we 've traversed three parts of the globe,  
But *in all the land were no women found*  
So fair as the daughters of Job.\*

January 1912

## GOING TO THE POLL

**M**ONEY makes the motor go,  
As the motor makes the voter go  
Driving to the poll.

'Money makes the mare go'  
For all whoever dare go  
Riding to the Poll.

But here comes Willie Walker,  
That sound old Tory talker—  
A walker to the Poll.

17.9.12

## 'MEUM ET TUUM'

**S**CARING crows in the *mangels*!  
Ho! the old shirt dangles,  
Dangles in the wind.  
Please, observe it's *my* shirt—my night-shirt—  
The best once of its kind!

\* [A compliment paid to a Mr. Job W——s, who had three very pretty daughters, and apparently very healthy ones too.]

See his white (?) tails sailing,  
 And fat crows on the railing  
 (After they have dined)  
~~Scoffing~~ <sup>your</sup> ~~Mocking~~ at ~~you~~ scarecrow—my night-shirt—  
 Dangling in the wind!

17.9.12

## POSTAGE-STAMPS AND WHISKY

SHE'S feeding fishes in the pond,  
 Our mutual friend Gillespie,  
 'Bout whom you said she's only fond  
 Of postage-stamps and whisky!

Poor Lune!—and so she's run her race!  
 Whatever stamps and spirit taught her,  
 You may be sure it is the case  
 She's fonder still of water.

April Fool's Day, 1916

## 'SPOTTED DOG,' RENAMED SPOTTED BITCH

[A parody on eight lines of Coleridge's 'Christabel,' the 6th to 13th] \*

TODAY we, seeming rich,  
 Have a sugar'd 'spotted bitch';  
 And maketh answer every tongue  
 To the pudding (so far quite unsung).  
 Watch how the spots—the sultanas, I mean—  
 Disappear, too quick to be seen!  
 List to the smacking of lip and of tongue—  
 And now the pudding's gone (and sung)!

3.8.15

\* "Sir Looline, the Baron rich,  
 Hath a toothless mastiff bitch;  
 From her kennel beneath the rock  
 She maketh answer to the clock  
 Four for the quarters, and twelve for the hour;  
 Ever and aye, by shine and shower,  
 Sixteen short howls, not over loud,  
 Some say she sees my lady's shroud."



## Another Suicide - Impromptu.

Ah, poor Mrs C. —! she couldn't be sane,  
when we think what she did with her life:—  
Released from all pain by the wheel of a train,  
She resign'd the good office of wife!  
10.2.15

## A wife scores one

(Husband) Give me a goblet of old port wine,  
Red as the Dragon's blood —

(Wife) And see you after you've felt so fine,  
Wed to my heels in the mud!

(Husband) Wine was the drink <sup>on which</sup> I portend —  
Better than coffee and tea —

(Wife) Wait till your poems come to be read  
By more than yourself and me!

## Impromptu

To Mary

27.12.14

I like your little guinea pig,  
But I like my lettuce more:  
He's been out in the garden, ~~may~~ —  
I wish you'd shut his door!

17.7.09  
Craigville: Blackhall

## The Jump of a Flea \*

Has any one fathom'd the jump of a flea?  
Has he much of a burden to carry? — Well, no —  
Just a head and some muscles and nerves to let go;  
Put a weight on his back and see where he'd be!  
14.1.14

\* We'd been out crosscountry jumping, Stella and Harold and I, and the wee-est of the party, took a flying leap, with a five foot drop. I compared the performance with that of a flea's even much more wonderful feat, and before we'd gone a couple of hundred yards I had shaped my thoughts into a respectable galtraine of nonsense!



To Mrs W.Y. Sellar, of 15 Buckingham  
Terrace, Edinburgh.

[Being part of one of the many letters I  
had written to her, a great supporter of my  
drawings. Mrs Sellar was one of the leaders  
of Edinburgh Society for very many years. She  
was the aunt by marriage of Andrew Lang,  
who inscribed his first book of poems to her.]

..... But with regard to one of my gifts  
to you, I feel I have unconsciously been an im-  
poster! — the same is but a penny postcard  
dished up with good Italian taste, —

A little tinted board, a little paste,  
with brains behind 'em both; —  
yet still, I'm very loth

To let a trusting treasury in haste  
Dole out its gold and silver for the mearest taste! —

You have only so far tasted the "Dog"! The  
sender of these coins in cheque form [as a return  
gift to <sup>the writer's</sup> children] shall now get the truth of her  
too generous and unsuspecting self well into him —  
the postcard shall <sup>soon</sup> be supplanted by one of the much  
larger and genuine proofs of "FACTOR" [the  
Lindilthgow & Stirlingshire foxhound, champion of  
Peterborough in 1913].....

9.7.14  
Old Farmhouse  
(rann and Bridge)

 J. G. Sellar

[Mrs Sellar, in good faith and unsuspecting, had  
very kindly sent a guinea, and thought she  
had received what she 'ordered'.]

For A Street Cry

Plums! Plums!!  
Pershore plums!!!  
Large and yellow —  
Best of plums!  
Here's the fellow  
Sells those plums!  
Plums! Plums!!  
Pershore plums!!!



## A CLEAN SHAVE AND FRESH AIR

THE BEST MEDICINE FOR A SINNER

**I** HEAR the whinings of a craven—  
A man surpassing mean,  
Who stays at home all day unshaven,  
Instead of nice and clean.

Why don't he pull himself together  
And smooth his pointed chin—  
First scrape himself, then breast the weather,  
To purge his soul of sin?

January 1918

## IMPROMPTU

GULLED BY A PARSON

**G**REYHAired—almost grey-witted (?)—  
Is the man we fain had pitied,  
But for his having stooped  
To gamble and be duped  
By a civil, cunning parson.

For him may fortune mend—  
Though a pity he should spend  
A 'bob' on a rogue who knows  
So jolly well he shows  
The faith of *petit garçon*!

2.1.09

## APPLE-PIE AT MACKIE'S

*[Impromptu retort to a mean acquaintance seated at one of  
Mackie's luncheon tables, Princes Street, Edinburgh]*

**S**IXPENCE for apple-pie !—  
Great Scot ! that 's devilish high !'  
“ Sixpence for apple-pie,” you say ?—  
Have you thought what Mackie has to pay  
As rent for his roomy halls,  
For the paper on the walls  
And paint upon the doors  
And carpet on the floors,  
For the coals upon the fire  
And cooks that must never tire,  
A maid to wait on you at table,  
Where you may sit as long 's you 're able  
With a napkin on your knee,  
As clean as it could be,  
And praise the Lord with all your might  
For giving you health and appetite  
And wealth enough to pay  
To-day  
What seems at first sight high  
For a damned good apple-pie ?'

10.9.10

## AT THE SCOTTISH ZOOLOGICAL PARK

**T**WAS here that I made the decision  
To avoid a particular beast,—  
The VICUNA \* that spits with precision,  
Not affected with shame in the least !

\* *Lama Vicugna*, one of the Llama tribe, which is labelled, 'WARNING—this animal spits and bites.'



## Epitaph for an old Donkey

" LADAS "

For years and years the children's daily joy,  
The pet of many a passer-by,  
His memory claims more than a sigh,  
Ridden by all - and last by little Roy;  
Each loved his life, each loved the ride.  
'Twas here he lived, and dropped, and died.\*

\* He was buried in the paddock under the  
spot where he dropped. The wind had been  
terrible through the night and he was found  
dead in the morning.  
Old Farmhouse Crossed Bridge.  
28.9.14

## A Schoolboy's Reflection - outside an Edinburgh Fishmonger's shop

It's nice to see the salmon lying  
on marble slabs so cool;  
It's nicer still to see 'em rising  
In some big Border pool;  
It's nicest when we land 'em dying!  
When we get home from School!  
Edinburgh - Charlotte Str.  
3.7.14

## The Simple Life

Courts and Kings and glorious things  
Are all right in their way;  
Cottage life and simple things  
Are better mine to-day.

One means money more than mine,  
And trouble in its train;  
The other, with the mitz that's mine,  
May mend a batter'd brain.

14.12.14



Impromptu -

At an exhibition of some very rough  
portfolio sketches by the late Anton Mauve\*

Now "for the touch of a vanish'd hand!" -

The marvellous touches of Mauve  
In just an old Hollander digging the land  
Or prodding the end of a drove.

Twenty for him! And what for the other?

Eight for a heifer's hoof! -

Dealers know how to cut down a brother  
Starving for want of 'oof'!

26.1.14  
Edinburgh.

Impromptu

To Dorrit

A little self-denyng  
Straight from a loving heart,  
A little more relyng  
On cautious conscience' part  
And the home's the happier for it -  
And so'll be little Dorrit!

24.6.13

\* Some of these, of course, wonderfully clever; but,  
in my opinion, priced out of all proportion to their  
intrinsic value.

Impromptu -

To A poor Speller

A pair of straws,  
A pair of drawers,  
Are both the same in sound;  
But in their spelling  
(Excuse my telling)  
A difference is found!

1917

Someone said of the above "yes, very nice, but you  
can't add another change as good to go with it."  
"Can't I?" said I. "Well, here goes" and I was  
out with this -  
A little less in-rushing  
Across the front-door mat -  
A little more brook-brushing  
(Take mother's word for that -  
And the floor's the happier for it)  
And so'll be little Dorrit!

(2)

swifter

ails more of next laughter  
But when playing with the boys  
and the sheep, the sounder noise for it -  
and so'll be little Dorrit!

A little more obeying  
At lessons and at tea -  
(Attend to what I'm saying -  
And Nurse knows what's right for this)  
And the home's the happier for it -  
And so'll be little Dorrit!

A little extra scrubbing!  
As nurse has shown you how -  
A little more hand-rubbing  
With soap and water now  
And the walls are cleaner for it -  
And so'll be little Dorrit!

(Published in  
The Scottish Chronicle)  
5.1.1923.  
Nurse's Poems  
by H. W. W.



His body's called graceful  
Whose name is the GNU ;  
Compared with a racehorse,  
We call him a 'screw' !  
And with head like the Divil,  
But not nearly so civil,  
His friends may be counted but few.

26.7.16

## GLOVER'S 'LEONIDAS' (1737)

EVERY one spoke of it,  
Every one wrote of it ;  
That is the joke of it ;  
Here is *my* note of it :—

To-day no one reads it ;  
Why did he write it ?  
Nobody needs it,  
Only worms bite it !

[No one needs what only worms can digest. Glover's 'famous Epic of Miltonian proportions' was published by Robert Dodsley in 1737, and by some critics of the mid-eighteenth century was preferred to *Paradise Lost*, and praised by Fielding and Lord Chatham.]

10.7.16

## TO MY OLD ARM-CHAIR

WAST thou not born a century  
Before I saw the light ?  
Yet, twenty years thou 'st carried me  
By day and into night.

53

"A long life, and when I shall die,  
Will chide me for leaving that old arm-chair ?"

'Thou 'st stood the strain year after year  
 Without a wince or groan,  
 And held me up through smart and tear,  
 Resting both brain and bone :—  
 I would not be the man I am  
 Had it not been for thee.  
 All I can give 's this epigram  
 For what thou 'st done for me,  
 Giver of life—  
 A second wife.

Written on my forty-fifth birthday,  
 13.5.13

## 'BETTER A WEE HOUSE THAN NAE BIELD'

*Linnis Long*  
*e* *rather*  
**I** DINNA stay in spacious ha's—  
 My hame 's nae bigger nor a rick,  
 Wi' four mirk ~~Lothian~~ whunstane wa's,  
 An', like their tinant, rather thick—  
 (Thick-set, not  
 thick-headed, I hope !).  
 20.6.13

## OF JAMES R—, ESQ., ILLOGICIAN

**Y**ON man, he annoys me ; for no one can court  
 By the turn of his spoke such a stinging retort :  
 From the hub of his chatterbox wheel to the rim  
 Each spoke he puts in 's badly turned by a Jim.

2.2.16



## Impromptu -

on viewing a portrait of the Earl  
of Haddington, K.G., by Fiddis Watt  
at the R.S.A.

Like him in every way: - that cold blue eye,  
That mouth with quivering lips just-going to speak,  
Those soft and silky waves of whitening hair -  
A gallant sportsman, soldier, gentleman.

16.5.14

## Ex Tempore -

To one of my children

I hear you've been sick, I see you are ill;  
Now do, my dear child, take just one other pill  
From the hand of your Doctor George A. Foltergill.

2.8.13

## THE TANGO

~~They went properly mad on the Tango  
As they danced to the twang of the banjo!~~

[Five days after I wrote these lines, I was informed that  
the banjo was dying out. Last night, I saw by to-day's  
Sealsman, Lord Dunsin told the company at the W.S.  
dinner that conversation is also dying, and referred to 'Bridge'  
& the birth of 'The Tango'.]

As an art-conversation is dying - nearly dead,  
Like the banjo.

According to the bent of the mind or the shape of your figure,  
It may shortly be beaten by 'Bridge' or a bigger  
"Catch on" (to be vulgar) - that wonderful dance  
called the Tango!

9.1.14

His enjoyment nocht but hunting,  
I noo employ fresh powers;  
For other cares than hunting,  
Mann use these precious hours. 27.11.22

The circumstances of the death of the Earl of Haddington, K.G., are such that it is not surprising that the Earl should have been so fond of the banjo. The Earl was a very accomplished musician and was particularly fond of the banjo. He was also a very good dancer and was particularly fond of the Tango. The Earl's death was a great loss to the country and the world.



## Military Tenure of Old

And all he asked in return  
For twenty bovatres of his land,  
Was simple faith and dogged strength  
In a fearless mounted mail-clad man.

1914

## The "Ex libris" of an old Book

Behold this quaint and personal conceit,  
That here on every page our eyes must meet,  
That with recurrent tedious pomp proclaims  
The bearer of two ancient-family names.

1914

## The Port's Girl

Lips of coral, teeth-like pearls,  
And a finely rounded chin —  
(That's the way they like to begin);  
Lustrous eyes, and a beautiful head  
Pois'd on a swan-like neck of snow —  
~~(That's the way they like to go)~~  
Lovely nut-brown natural curls  
Flatten'd on the forehead high —  
With (That's the ~~sort~~ to make 'em sigh);  
Lordly fortune and estate  
Gentle in manner, meek in mind —  
(Such a girl as we never find!).

16.12.14

## The Dedicatory Lines of British Fire-marks

Recalling no names,  
But sacred to the memory of each gallant fireman —  
Him who willingly held his own in his hands  
Seeking to rescue the life of another  
Scorning the thought of Death's demands —  
Who has died in the flames.

1911



## LETTER TO A MAN WHO OWED ME MORE THAN I OWED HIM

S<sup>IR</sup>—

At the unwearying elbow of 'J. B. B.'  
(Whoever it is—a he or a she)

'Twould seem that a spirit of ill might be,  
Prompted to treat me as foxes treat geese,  
When they rob them of sleep, and then—if you please—  
Take the heart out of life as their passions increase!  
Most geese have a mistress—and I have one too,  
One who'll see I no longer am robb'd of my due:  
She (the Law) deals with debt—tit for tat—one for you!

30.7.14



# Muntz's Robin Red

who has not heard of Albert Muntz,  
The man all Pytchlydom knew once?

As I write old days come o'er me,  
And Robin Red's before me.  
There must still be a few who remember the stride of that thoroughbred bay,  
Taking all his fences neatly  
And gliding on so sweetly  
That his rider scarcely seemed to feel him all the way;  
And the rider knew no other  
To treat him as a brother  
And bear so big a burden \* through a long and tiring day.

I remember that brave wilter  
As we galloped helter-skelter  
From the famous stronghold known as sure-find Kilworth Sticks,



When coupled to the Master  
We left behind disaster  
In the ditches filled with scores of Harrys, Toms and Dicks;  
Yes, I mind me of Sir Albert,  
So stately and so stalwart,  
When we checked and pulled up sharp beside the Lilbourne ticks.

He turned to me instantly  
To say his bay could "canter"  
As no horse with the Pytchly had ever done before -  
He never knew a racehorse  
To make so good a chase-horse  
And carry in Northamptonshire his sixteen stone and more.  
As the season then was waning,  
He put the horse in training;  
But 'twas very soon his face a changed expression wore:

The bay in Balty's stable  
Was found to be unable  
To stand the extra 'goulling', and - dropt down dead!  
Of all the cast-off racers,  
Of all the fallant chasers  
That in our glorious hunting grounds now sadly trail,  
There'd not be very many -  
I doubt if there be any -  
To wrest the hunter's place from Muntz's Robin Red.

Cramond Bridge  
11. 2. 21

— other till

Published in  
Bailey's Magazine  
Vol. 1, No. 12

\* Sir Albert T. Muntz, Bart., M.P., of Dunsmore, Rugby, rode 18 stone nearly - he walked over sixteen - and was the best wilter-wight to hounds of his day in the midlands. He was also famous as a shire-horse breeder.



## The Hansom Horse

[I have known the peculiar sensation, that  
delightful sensation of riding through the  
streets of London in a Hansom ~~cab~~ <sup>and on</sup> ~~cab~~ <sup>since the year 1872, when I was</sup>  
four years of age. — From my Diary.]

I always hail a hansom when I see one in the Myle; —  
It's the rattle of the harness and the jingle of the bell  
That makes me feel a young one in a way I cannot tell.

Adown the wooden thoroughfare we quickly slip along;  
The clatter of the shoes — (itself a merry song) —  
— makes me think I've got a ~~little~~ <sup>silver shilling</sup> worth that'll do my purse no <sup>wrong</sup>.

The cabby lifts the ~~shilling~~ <sup>silver shilling</sup>, with a smile upon his face,  
As I tell him he's a good 'un in the shafts to make the pace;  
And he loves to tell the story how he won an Epsom race.

The old horse looks me over, as if he too could tell  
He'd had a four-born sportsman behind his jingling bell;  
And the way I feel his ~~foot~~ <sup>bit</sup> lets him know it now as well.

— I dream I'm in a hansom, that I'm riding down the Myle,  
With the rattle of the harness and the jingling of the bell,  
And I feel I'm still a young one in a way I cannot tell.

5. 11. 16  
(ramond Bridge)

Death of his old grey mare

Be as true as <sup>my</sup> this old grey mare —  
So true from beginning to end  
Of her long and unblemished career —  
So thou'lt never be false to a friend.

May thy thoughts be as clean as her coat,  
May thy manners be gentle and kind,  
As were hers in the stable and field,  
So thou'lt never an enemy find.

1909

published, with a sketch, as a  
tailpiece to Twenty Sporting Designs,  
Edinburgh, 1911.

(also published in  
Baily's Magazine,  
January, 1921)



# In the Nursery Landing

Tommy's willing, (quite unwilling)  
with his worst of for  
See him standing on the landing  
with a bloody nose.

"Hasten, hasten, fetch a basin" —  
Johnny's knock'd his nose —  
Bleeding, bleeding, Tommy's bleeding  
Drops as red as rose.

6.11.21

# Hunting Manners!

How we hate the fellows tiding in our pocket  
No taking buttons off our breeches,  
As ~~the~~ we leave them and their manners like a rocket  
In like possession of the ditches!

7.8.22

# Fox-hunting Forever

1/2 breaks, <sup>and</sup> hero of my story, —  
Remind me of my former glory,  
And — though in dreams — bring me some rays  
Of hope to beat this spleen unholly  
And cure my creeping melancholy —  
Yea, force me into other ways, —  
Remind me of my hunting days.

1. 11. 13  
Old farmhouse  
Crawford Bridge

# An Auld Scot on the Detail of the Fox-hunter's Dress of the 'Sixties

These be things on which I dotz: —  
Slatid seams i' huntin' coat,  
Saddle-claith an' sandwich pocket —  
Toast wi' tongue an' whisky locket;  
Buttons plugg'd an' gilt aboot,  
Thumb o' snab  
An' collar tab.  
Breeches detail alsna note: —  
Pocket fob  
Yecanna tob,  
Some wi' cock o'comb, some wi' oot;  
Buckskin bow i' place o' garter —  
Baith look weel, sae quhat's it matter.  
Mickle things i' breeks an' coat  
Fill me fu' o' anesdotz.

Edinburgh

15. 1. 14

"Hasten, hasten, fetch a basin" —  
Johnny's knock'd his nose —  
Bleeding, bleeding, Johnny's bleeding  
Drops as red as rose

6. 11. 20/1



## OLD RAG OF RED

*To my Father*

SUCH a present was sent me this morning,  
That I pictured me four years of age,  
When the spirit of sport was just dawning—  
How I dwelt on that memory's page!  
With the days, then, when scarce I could toddle,  
These 'leathers' I once more may wed,  
And accept—for a new sporting model—  
Your *Old Rag of Red*.

I can think of your figure being measur'd—  
Forty inches at least round the chest—  
It was always your strength that you treasur'd,  
Though you always were clad in the best;  
And I witness the pride of the cutter,  
As he whips out the last bit of thread  
To hear the nice words that you utter  
'Bout your *Old Rag of Red*.

More than forty long years have passed over  
Since I saw you prepared for the chase,—  
And those years were not *all* rose and clover—  
Not a win-as-you-please kind of race,—  
Yet I mind e'en the gilt of each button,  
While I stood by the side of your bed  
And watched every turn as you put on  
Your *Old Rag of Red*.

When our lessons were over we'd meet you  
Jogging home on a mud-spatter'd steed,  
With what welcome and gladness we'd greet you  
On our faces you'd easily read.  
For the 'love of old loves' and young frolic  
I have long'd, as I often have said,  
To own for myself that red relic—  
Your *Old Rag of Red*.

I shall value that 'rag' and the 'leathers'  
 For my den where they'll ever remain :  
 We can see they've been out in all weathers,  
 And were well drench'd with Warwickshire rain,  
 And the 'bloom' on the coat and the breeches  
 Tell a story of more than one hunt ;  
 We see too—by some of the stitches !—  
 You rode in the front ;

For those stains and additional stitches  
 An acquaintance with hard-riding mean—  
 And a fairly close knowledge of ditches  
 Full of mire and water, I ween !  
 To a sportsman this makes them the dearer,  
 When he knows that ~~he~~ rode in the van : *gan*  
 They all go to show that the wearer  
 Was once a bold man.

After all, when the flesh has done working,  
 Tears of bliss may as often fall fast,  
 As the thoughts in the brain that lie lurking  
 Are re-loosened on times of the past.  
 I had relics in plenty to start with  
 To mind me of living and dead,  
 But *this* one I *never* can part with—  
 Your *Old Rag of Red*.

14.1.14

## THE SPLENDOUR OF TULLY

**O**H, the splendour of Tully !—its ~~grace~~ and its clover, *grass*  
 That would take you a week to tramp it all over,  
 Harrow'd ever in season and rid of its tares,  
 Then sprinkl'd with shorthorns and scores of good mares.



## Not A Hossman

We call him "Jimmy Bossman",  
That dress'd-up dandy Scot,  
Who thinks he is a hossman -  
But hossmen think he's not.

A hossman when he's walking,  
And when he's close to port;  
But his riding an' his talking  
Is <sup>are</sup> not the hossman's sort.

He's "Bossman" and a hossman  
To <sup>those</sup> ~~all~~ who'll lick his sance;  
But "Bossman" not a hossman  
To <sup>all</sup> ~~those~~ who know a horse.

28.1.16

Rhyme run off  
on a tram-car  
going down Princes  
Street, Edinburgh

## At Usher's Brewery To George Usher Esq

I sketch'd to the tune of a champing bit,  
And lunch'd to the ring of a hammer; -  
The sketch was the sketch of a game little tit,  
The lunch was a "wreal an'ammer".

The coopers were hooping the staves of a cask  
In the yard at the best of breweries,  
As I sat me down to my lightsome task  
In sound of them beating like Furies.

But give me the tune of a champing bit,  
With the feel of a polo-pony;  
And I'd leave my lunch (and perhaps my wit)  
Riding till I was bony.

1912  
Edinburgh



## To Hunting Farmers

"All praise to the farmer that lends us the land."

Sport is not doom'd with such fellows as yonder,  
Mounted on 'cattle' with courage and pace,  
Turning from nothing to rest or to ponder,  
Flanking the hounds as they fly in the race.

There is the sort that no one disgraces,  
Hardy and staying and handy withal,  
Clever at 'tipping' all ~~sorts~~ kinds of places —  
Wattle and timber and water and wall.

Those are the men who know how to do it;  
They in themselves never take any harm —  
Men that can fork all the day (if you knew it)  
Loading the wains on a Lothian farm.

Quick with the eye and quick in decision,  
Steady of limb and as subtle in joint —  
Those are the men of the first division,  
Equal to any on every point.

How do they do it? They're <sup>out</sup> on the leather  
Scouring all over the country alone,  
Breasting the air in all sorts of weather,  
Seeing that everything's well with their own;

out in the saddle on young 'uns and old 'uns,  
Summer and winter from sunrise till late,  
making 'em strong 'uns and making 'em bold 'uns,  
Fit to pop over a five-bar'd gate.

Witness 'em sailing along in the stubble  
With hands that are perfect and well-balanced seat;  
Those have been theirs from a child without trouble,  
To see 'em sail by me I say is a treat.

Thanks to the farmer that leads the 'field' striding  
over his grass ~~at~~ at a pace that is grand,  
Thanks to him here for a lesson in riding, —  
Here's luck to "the farmer who lends us the land"!

15. xi. 13

Cramond Bridge

[published in Baileys Magazine (London)  
Feb. 1914.]



What paddocks ! What stables ! What gardens so trim !  
 What heavenly pools where the moorhens swim !  
 What transport so quick to the joys of Japan ?  
 Yea, there we may say that our heaven began.

And what of its owner, the Colonel to boot,  
 The man that back'd up with his brains every foot ?  
 Does he live for himself ? Well—as much for a friend,  
 If friend he will honestly be to the end.

What rattle of rats in those old Tully walls !—  
 There's company there when none in its halls !  
 I have found it in both, and a cellar not bare  
 When the Colonel's at home and the right fellows there.

The caw of the rooks, the smell of the peat,  
 The ripple of water that wells at our feet ;  
 Every tree that thrives round us, each horse and each mare,  
 Will dwell in our memory when far from Kildare.

20.10.14

## 'DANNY' MAHER'S DEAD HEAT

[Recalling the famous jockey's own thoughts during the historic finish of the Eclipse Stakes (£10,000), when he on Lord Rosebery's 'Neil Gow' ~~lost~~ <sup>was tied</sup> with Mr. Fairie's 'Lemberg.'\* Maher had said he was 'desperately anxious to win for the greatest sportsman in the land, Lord Rosebery.' He was riding, he said, 'the funniest horse that any man could ever ride, one which you know can win IF he cares to.']

*Dead-heat*

**T**WO furlongs from home he draws up to the horse,  
 The *only* one left to be beat on the course.  
 What a maddening anxiety ! (to others sublime) —  
 What a strain crowded into some seconds of time !  
 'Danny' feels he is hanging, not doing his best—  
 Ah ! here is the rub—must he still hesitate  
 To hit him in dread of his *then* doing less ?—  
 Must he be but a slug ?—is it all but too late ?—

*8!*

59

\* A short while before, the same two horses,  
 with the same jockeys up (Dillon rode Lemberg),  
 met in the Two Thousand Guineas and Neil  
 Gow won by a short-head. — Mr. George Lambton  
 has something to say about these two races in his  
 very interesting book Men and Horses I have Known  
 (Thornton Butterworth, Ltd. 1924)

He had desperately ridden him with hands and with heels—  
He had made to his senses the best of appeals ;  
So he picks up the whip to just risk it,  
Gives him one lightning cut on the brisket,—  
And now comes the grief that he's lost him the race  
As he swerves from the whip—no, he puts on the pace,  
In a whirl of excitement they're just past the post,  
Head and head, to know who has won and who's lost . . .  
A dead heat !—even that is relief to his ears,  
And he welcomes the verdict 'midst deafening cheers.

## TO MY HUNTER FILLY

**I** HAVE watched you high on the sky-line,  
I have been at your side by the brook,  
I have followed the ease of your paces  
And admired your thoroughbred look :  
Your sire was the sire of 'Ardpatrick'—  
No gallanter horse for the race ;  
Your dam was the cleverest at polo—  
A treasure with plenty of pace.

You will be with me only a season,  
Ere you leave for an English shire ;  
I shall love you and hate you and love you  
As I give you the school you require,—  
Your mettle I know 'll be a teaser—  
You've the blood of an Irish line ;  
But when once you have yielded you'll go as  
A bottle of old red wine.



## The Brachhead Filly

On the Brachhead stubble-clover graze a polo  
mare and foal;  
There's their bed, and there's their playground where  
they race and where they roll;  
Showing black against the skyline, full of muscle,  
full of blood —  
Silhouetted strength and breeding, long in coat and  
limbic with mud.

"Who's the breeder of the filly?" "Willie Gray — jist  
like his Dad —  
Guid wi' horse, fond o' huntin'." "Who's the sire?"  
"Why, 'Sailor Lad',  
Him 'at stans at Easter Craigie, serving-meats for  
far an' wide  
For the racing Earl of Rosebery — him 'at bets but  
Daur na ride."

17.1.14

(ramond Bridge  
Linlithgowshire.

To T. Pickernell Esq ("Mr Thomas")  
of King's Heath, Birmingham

Here's a health to a gentleman jock — Mr Thomas! —  
Who had won his way quickly to fame,  
And has trod the not always clean path of the sportsman  
Without the least stain on his name.

9. xi. 12

[Mr Pickernell was unconscious at the time  
my letter, containing this rhyme, arrived and  
died two days afterwards, in the 29<sup>th</sup> year of his age.  
He rode in seventeen Grand Nationals, winning  
on Anais (1860), The Lamb (1870) and on  
Pathfinder (1875) and was placed on several  
other occasions. He may be looked upon as  
the most distinguished steeple-chase rider of the  
19<sup>th</sup> century.]



# My Native Warwickshire

I love to look back on a smiling country,\* the  
land that had given me birth,  
where all the meadows with May were border'd —  
the whitest of May upon earth;  
where grasses and gayest of flowers would ripple,  
bestirr'd by the wind,  
and where banks were golden with thousands of cowslips,  
that only now nod in my mind.

How little sown'd till'd, and none of it fallow, of  
the land that had given me birth  
just oceans of meadow and plenty of pasture, ~~the~~ the  
sweetest of all upon earth;  
and the woodlands were wide, and covert-abundant  
and sure of a find —  
Fit stronghold for ~~Redoubt~~ <sup>foxes</sup>, a century hunted — ah!  
many's the run in my mind.

I love to pore over the <sup>box-hunting</sup> ~~catching~~ days of ~~fox-chasing~~ in the  
land that had given me birth,  
where the country was fenced with as little damned wire  
as in any then known on the earth;  
and this, thanks to paying for poultry and damage —  
the rulers were kind  
and they and the farmers pull'd generally better than any  
that come to my mind.

But a season or two — that's all I remember — in the  
land that had given me birth;  
though my Dad hunted more, in the 'sixties and 'seventies —  
not a better old Dad upon earth.  
As an infant on wheels I had seen the North Warwickshire,  
and astride at thirteen;  
Not again was I with 'em till close upon thirty — and  
perhaps I should never have been.

\* The country round Leamington,  
where I was born, 13 May 1868, and  
about Rugby and Hillmorton, where I was  
in practice, in 1896 and 1897, and hunted  
so much.



## PRIDE OF PLACE

*[Lines inscribed beneath a print of a meet of the Pytchley Hunt]*

**T**WAS Isaac and the Pytchley Hunt—  
The crew that knew the quickest way  
To fly from field to field  
A record race—  
That in the past had made me say,  
'To no one will I yield  
My pride of place.'

John Isaac and the Pytchley Hunt  
Were 'thrusters' in my younger day,  
Who gallop'd with a will  
And knew no fear :—  
I seem to hear them laughing say,  
'No sport without a spill,  
Without a tear.'

John Isaac and the Pytchley Hunt  
Of days gone by in memory live  
To keep me in my place—  
A 'thruster' still.  
To each who sees this print I give  
My word the Pytchley pace  
Could cure or kill !

11.7.12

## RED COAT AND GREEN COAT

RED FOR THE FOX

**W**HETHER red be the coat or green be the coat,  
It matters not which—I care not a groat—  
If the 'game' mean to fly to a country remote.

Red be the coat ?—Then this be my prayer;—  
Give me the feel of a thoroughbred mare  
With pluck for a gallop and speed to spare ;

Bright be the morning, cloudy the noon,  
A scent in the covert, a fox from it soon,  
Loud be the horn and merry the tune.

Hounds that are fast, hounds that are true,  
Over the grass and through fences a few  
Are nursing the line in November dew ;

Merrily onward, merrily on,  
Noses near to the ground on the line he has gone,  
On without checking, merrily on ;

Heads getting higher, sterns falling low,  
Streaming along over pastures and plough—  
Hounds of the Pytchley, ye know how to go !

Brought to a check and casting anon,  
Catching the scent again, on with their song—  
Merrily onward, merrily on.

Leaping the drains with the ease of a deer,  
Charging the blackthorn with strength of a steer—  
Hounds of the Pytchley, ye know no fear !

No rest in the gorse for this vixen to-night ;  
On, on past the village, and, twisting to right,  
She 'd have turn'd for the brook—but hounds are in sight ;

She 's nothing to do but turn and defend—  
Nothing to do but wait for the end,  
And give up her flesh for the Pytchley to rend.

And her fate is the fate of thousands of others  
That have prey'd on the weak and were queens in the coverts—  
The gamest of game of our country-bred mothers.



For I added but love to the soups of the Kennels\* in  
the land that had given me birth;  
yet they let me alone who doctor'd Hillmorton — with  
not — the best luck upon earth!  
all praise to the Secretary, and to the Master, to a  
sportsman not blind,  
Lord Algernon Percy and game "Johnny" Arkwright —  
I have 'em both still in my mind.

At Dunchurch and Clifton were favourite meets in the  
land that had given me birth;  
And around Bunker's Hill, Hillmorton and Lilbourne was  
the greatest fun upon earth.  
Whether I hounds from the Kenilworth Kennels or Brixworth  
were scouring that region,  
I can tell you we had to stick tight to enjoy it — the  
loose horses counted were legion!

Besides stake-and-bounds, ~~as~~ high as the 'National fences, there'  
were brooks filling up to the brink —  
And of three hundred mounted not thirty would take 'em, but  
the writer was not one to shrink;  
and the crowd of good fellows and hard-riding ladies in  
the land of his birth,  
as oil on the water should trouble be listed, saw him  
safely return to the earth —

And here he is still, twenty-two  
years after it all, but at  
old farmhouse, Crumond Bridge,  
Linlithgowshire.

\* I subscribed only to Thirley's, with which famous pack I hunted two days a week, and had odd days with the N. Warwickshire — for nothing!

Nothingill  
8. 2. 20  
The Glory of the gallop  
"With that merry music ringing"

A stirring twenty minutes in the vanguard of a clinking run  
is better far than all the laggard's pleasure of a season's fun.

24. xi. 20



## The Beginning and The End of The Twiotdale Foxhunter's Club Race

[This was run at 1.20 P.M. on the 3<sup>rd</sup> April, 1914,  
over eight miles (6½ mile point) of fair hunting  
country, from Huntley Hill to a point near  
Whitchaugh, by Hawick. The time taken by the  
winner 26 mins.]

The tryst was Braw Yett, at the Haining,  
The country the Duke of Buccleuch's,  
And the weather ideal ~~at~~ (not raining!)  
Huntley Hill was the spot where they loose  
To the sound of a lusty "vieu holloa",  
And the 'field' darted off in a bunch,  
With a line in ~~their~~ <sup>the</sup> minds to follow  
On the top of a wee bit ~~at~~ <sup>of</sup> lunch.

Bold yeoman and farmer and member  
Who'd a share in the best of the pace  
Have every good cause to remember  
That Border hill point-to-point race;—  
Of the twenty 'catch-weights' that were started,  
Nearly all gallop'd up at the end  
On 'cattle' well-bred and great-hearted,  
With no fear of "bellows to mend".

There was Spoot\* on "The Raider" of Riddell,  
And Roberts<sup>S</sup>, and Chape<sup>P</sup> on "Night-light",  
And a Cox with his "Fiddler" less fiddle,  
And Douglas<sup>X</sup> astride of his "Knight",  
The farmer who figured as winner  
A little in front of the lot;  
And others to well earn their dinner  
Were Caverhill<sup>•</sup>, Turner<sup>2</sup> and Scott.<sup>3</sup>

4.4.14

- \* Captain Spoot, of Riddell, who finished 6<sup>th</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> for The Club Cup  
<sup>S</sup> Mr J. Roberts, of Selkirk, on "Safaree", who finished 5<sup>th</sup>  
<sup>P</sup> Colonel Captain (Afterwards Colonel) Gray-Chape, joint master of the  
Browickshire, and brother of Capt. Leslie Chape, the famous polo player,  
both sons of "The Squire" of Buntley Manor, who finished 2<sup>nd</sup> for  
The Club Cup.  
<sup>X</sup> Mr Thomas Douglas, on "Belled Knight".  
<sup>•</sup> Mr S. Q. M. S. Caverhill on flumeo III, who was first for The Yeomanry Cup



## GREEN FOR THE HARE

**G**REEN be the coat?—Then this be my prayer:—  
Give me the breath of the Westmorland air,  
Show me the speed of a mountain hare;

Early the hour and bright be the skies;  
Point me the place where the grey hare lies,  
One that will fly for six miles ere she dies;

*Bring* Give me the hounds that are cunningly taught,  
Such as can stoop on legs that are short,  
Hounds that are best of the harrier sort ~~that~~;

Bell-mouth'd and merry, and staying withal,  
Ready to turn and come to one's call—  
These are the hounds I love to recall;

Neither too short, and neither too tall, ~~that~~ *give*  
Be the horse which you'd ~~bring~~ *give* me that's good at a wall ~~that~~ *give*  
And can jump it where others would certainly fall ~~that~~;

*(to)* A hunter that's made with a powerful thigh  
To lift him along where the hills are high,  
One too ~~that~~ *that* travels with never a sigh.

On to her, harriers!—puss is away!  
Bravely she starts, and well she may—  
Is she not in for a dance to-day?

Ringing to right and ringing to left,  
Puzzling the pack till it's all but cleft—  
Puss is as crafty as hounds are deft!

Squatted for seconds, they're on her again—  
You could cover them all with a counterpane  
As they merrily hunt her along the lane.

Into a spinney, on to the grass,  
Up through the turnips quickly they pass  
And over the fence to the broad morass.

2 Mr F. Turner, of Upper Nisbet, who finished 7th, and 2nd for The Farmers' Cup. He is  
a son of Sir William Turner, Principal of Edinburgh University.  
3 Mr T. Robson Scott, master of the Redforest Hounds, on "Alpha", who was second,  
and winner of the Club Cup.



Turning right-handed, she leads the way  
Down by the Inn where we met to-day,  
The spot where the 'cry' had been brought to stay ;

Over the water, across the moor,  
Hastening like Pegasus from a pursuer,  
With the 'field' away back coming fewer and fewer.

But hounds and the huntsman are now in her sight,  
And my hunter and I struggle on in the flight  
To view her ahead on the breast of the height.

Eagerly onward, eager they fly,  
Never so much as to turn an eye—  
Eagerly onward, eager we fly.

Ruses and doubles now out of her mind,  
With never a hedgerow or shelter to find,  
She clings to the ~~moor~~ with the hounds behind.

See her hop to the wall—her last chance is found—  
And with one final effort prepare for the bound ;—  
She misses her mark, ~~and~~ falls to the ground  
To drop in the teeth of the foremost hound—

Who-whoop ! Harriers, tear her ! Who-whoop !

26.12.19

## BACK TO HILLMORTON ✱

**S**END me to live in sporting Hillmorton,  
And give me a runaway horse !—  
Was it not there long ago that I bought one—  
To ride with the thrusters, of course ?  
Was it not there that I fought one ?

Back to the mood that's harum-scarum !  
Back to the snaffle and rein  
And to the galloping cattle that wear 'em,  
Back to them handsome and plain,  
And to the blackthorns that tear 'em !

64

✱ Tower House, Hillmorton, near Rugby, in Warwickshire, was our residence in 1896 and 1897; and from there I hunted with the Pychley and N. Warwickshire, and enjoyed odd days with The Atherton, Frapton & Mr Fernis, practising Medicine at the same time.



## Of Adam Lindsay Gordon

He wrote his ride as he rode along, —  
For what he loved to feel he spoke;  
And in that music known as song  
He leaves his best for us to take.

14. 6. 14

With the Command Bragles (~~Aldershot~~)

I showed 'em a clean pair of heels  
And the breadth of a bruiser's back;  
And I laugh as one who feels  
They'd none of 'em come in ~~his~~ track.

5. 3. 19

Concerning a somewhat remarkable jump  
for ~~a~~ a Government horse, over  
a hog-backed stile, with two high-tips, between  
two posts not more than 10 ft. apart.  
I had hounes to myself for fully ten minutes;  
after this, the field went round, by another way,  
they were on the track of a too deer.

## Stars of the Chase

These spurs, with the crop, must stay where they are,  
They shall hang on my wall as a relic — a star —  
A guide to the days of the past — that were best —  
Happy times on a horse that I've ever since bless'd —  
Ere I hunt, rid of all, for my last long rest.

6. 1. 14.

Of "Posthlyn." (Mrs Hugh Peel's 'National winner')

What a jumper! So clean and so quick at his fences  
And away in his stride like an arrow! —  
No paddock imposter with outward pretences,  
But 'lepping' bred deep in his marrow.

Remarked in the 'Paddock' at a steeple chase meeting.  
No paddock-imposter with outward pretence,  
To none of 'em ~~there~~ <sup>here will</sup> he yield;  
He outjumps <sup>will make</sup> his opponents at every fence,  
And soon ~~more~~ <sup>hacks</sup> of the field.



## Of Warwickshire Lads

Over the water into the nettles  
Up with a buck and a scramble  
Down through the stubble nicely he settles  
Fronting a fence full of bramble  
Black as ~~you~~<sup>yet</sup> 'bowler', ~~five~~<sup>six</sup> foot in height, -  
All ~~you~~<sup>ye</sup> can do's to sit on and sit tight -  
And think that you're over, not that you aren't -  
That's how the Thruster sort do it.  
Lads from old Warwickshire - never say can't, -  
They're under or over or through it,  
Black as ~~you~~<sup>yet</sup> 'bowler', ~~five~~<sup>six</sup> foot in height, -  
All they will do's to sit on and sit tight.

Loamhead House: Kirkcliston  
19. ix. 18

[After Cub-hunting  
with the L and S.  
& riding a 4 yr. old  
that had never seen  
hounds before. I was  
reminded of my old  
'Thruster' days in the  
-midlands.]

Published in  
- Baily's Magazine  
January, 1921.

## John Peel's Horn

Broad was his forehead and curly his hair,  
In ringlets it fell down his neck;  
Blue were the eyes set back in his head,  
Blue still when his life was a wreck.

Peel was "the dart of <sup>those his</sup> ~~those~~ bright blue eyes",  
~~And~~ "loud was the blast <sup>of his</sup> ~~at that~~ horn",  
Made for a sportsman bred to the chase -  
~~And~~ only for that he was born.

5. 12. 15

[These lines to accompany a drawing by  
me of old Peel, encircled below with  
the identical curved horn which he sounded so often,  
& which I sketched in his <sup>rough</sup> ~~brother's~~ cottage at Ruthwite.]  
"Peel seemed to have come into the world only to send foxes out of it?"



Have I not known what it is to ride 'em ?—  
Have I not ridden from birth ?—  
Have I not known how to humour and chide 'em ?—  
All I once lived for on earth  
Was to be strong and astride 'em.  
30.12.13

## 'LET SLEEPING DOGS LIE'

**B**Y invitation I mounted 'The Drum,' and held him strong in the  
stubble,  
Till the pulling brute made my fingers numb—but I managed  
to burst the bubble—  
The cheating scheme to down me a peg on an underbred runaway devil  
That had thrown his owner and lamed his leg and never yet learned to  
be civil.  
Cried Sharp, 'You can send him at this if you choose—a tidy big place  
as you see.'  
He tried to refuse, and did refuse—but never again with *me* ;  
I kneed him tight and I rode him hard at the blindest part of the fence,  
And showed him how and henceforward a fool could be ruled by a rider's  
sense.  
I can feel the tug on my fingers yet—he feels it more on his jaws ;  
In a hundred years we shall both forget the bit and the injured paws.  
Now a moral by this :—leave an old 'sport' alone—let him that is  
sleeping lie,  
Or he 'll spring to his feet bringing you and your own down *two* or more  
pegs by and by.

26.7.12

## A HORSE-LOVER'S PENALTY

**I** SIGHTED her far on ahead,  
In the shafts of a Newington butcher's van,  
A mare I knew well, but never the man :—  
Long ago I was told she was dead.

The curl and the cock of those ears  
Were no other's, ~~and~~ the carriage of head and the tail ;  
And as memory flashed back to the day of her sale,  
My eyes were welling with tears.

I rushed to the side of the mare,  
I looked the old huntress all over and over ;  
A stranger for ages to carrot and clover  
I saw in the bones that were bare.

*she slipped in her stride*  
*of the Hunt* Ere ~~impetuous~~ on the lea,  
*'Stella'* There ~~were~~ <sup>was</sup> none in the past to outpace her :  
My ~~'Stella'~~ ! I longed then and there to embrace her,--  
She was still 'the same sixpence' to me.

I smoothed down her poor lean neck ;  
Then struggled away with a sigh and a groan  
To wish—yes indeed—she were once more my own,  
That years-smitten, pitiful wreck.

17.3.17

## GOOD AT GIVING ORDERS, OR, THE DAY'S WORK OF A PEER \*

**H**E'S good at giving orders is Farrington the peer,  
As he lounges in his sanctum on a snug ancestral chair.  
The stud-groom steps in early and stands to hear his will,  
Then shuts the door behind him with orders to fulfil.  
His valet too takes orders to clothe the peer in pink,  
And hastens to the wardrobe, while the peer puts pen in ink,  
And scribbles to the parson to dine with him that night,  
Then jumps into his leathers which are made to fit him tight,  
As tight below the knee-cap as bell-shaped up above ;  
And Bartley's boots he lugs on—the boots he's learned to love ;

66

\* A ballad which, so I am told, "wears a distinct  
and novel dress."



## The Smallest Man, But The Greatest Master Of Hounds

There lives close to Leicester, at Skiffington Hall,  
A wee little man that'll never grow tall;  
What he knows not of hunting was never worth knowing;  
He is often in front - and he always keeps going.

The most popular Master that ever has been,  
The smallest in 'pink' we ever have seen;  
He reign'd o'er a country renowned for its grass,  
And kennell'd a pack that no other <sup>could</sup> ~~could~~ <sup>would</sup> pass.

This is Tailby, we Tailby, a barrister taught;  
Who came to the Shires to show us good sport;  
He thought he could do it, he said he would try;  
That he did it no Leicestershire man will deny.

He is always seen sober, was never a smoker,  
Has a nerve like steel and the will of a stoker;  
He may break every bone that a setter can mend,  
But this'll not stop him - he'll ride to the end!

Here's health to that Master! - a <sup>master</sup> ~~master~~ of Masters -  
Who tackled the Country and faced all disasters;  
Good judge of a hound, good judge of a horse,  
Good judge of a man and - hunting, of course.

\* I knew Mr W. W. Tailby well. Not only had  
I met him out hunting on several occasions with the Pylehys &  
Mr Francis's Hounds - but I stayed with him and  
Mrs Tailby at Skiffington Hall, when I went to  
do a portrait of him for Vanity Fair in 1899.  
<sup>Annals</sup> ~~The History~~ of the ~~Old~~ Billisdon Hunt <sup>(Mr Francis's)</sup> 1856-1912  
details of the way Mr Tailby settled all disputes  
& conquered the Masters who were opposed to him.  
The head & shoulders of my portrait of him appears  
as a frontispiece to that book.

There's a key to every horse's mouth  
If you can only find it;  
And if you can't he may look out  
For better brains behind it! -

Another words, the horse may send you  
spinning and find better  
"hands" for the future - you  
might want to sell  
him!

7.8.22

The Fault of the Horse

The fault of the horse is the fault of the man.  
So gallop him on and sit still if you can;  
Living the end as well's the beginning;  
Surely is part of the battle of winning!



## A Bastard

Dreamlands I rose from my bed,  
Dreamlands I put on my coat,  
Dreamlands — with fancies not fled —  
I cross'd the old bridge of the Moat.

And here in the park must I wander  
To brush away thoughts that are red,  
And tread and tread on till I squander  
The thought that she really is dead?

I never will rest in the thought  
That the deeds of the dream only seem —  
Is my conscience so easily brought? —  
They are what they were in my dream! —

I know it — I feel it, — and his  
Is the murderer's cowardly hand;  
And if it be so sure then this  
Is the third 'he has shot on my land! —....

He's a bastard that shoots at a vixen  
When ~~there~~ <sup>these</sup> hounds that would eat her instead: —  
He'll give his young gamekeeper Nixon  
That he'll wish it were he that instead!

" . . . 6

## The Lions at Bradbourn Hall

The lions <sup>at</sup> the old front door  
Are colder now than row of yore, —  
Their velvet moss-grown coats are gone,  
The coats we loved to sit upon.  
That's what some vandal has done —  
Would that each beast 'd rise and roar  
And brain the devil at his door!

" 11



And when he's tied his 'kerchief in the smartest hunting knot,  
His valet brings his pink coat and a glass of brandy hot.

In a trice he mounts a pony, and digs his heels in her  
And hurries off to covert to meet his huntsman there.

And 'Tom' in turn takes orders to draw the Bingley Strips,  
As a groom leads up his hunter, on which he nimbly slips

And moves amongst the people who 'ride to hunt' that day.  
He hears his whipper's 'Tally' and sees a fox away.

When hounds have burst from covert, with the huntsman in their wake,  
Each looks the fence well over to find a place to take ;

The peer is first to follow—no one would go in front,  
For he's good at giving orders to the Farringtonshire Hunt.

His 'cattle' know their business and gallop game and strong—  
They are good at taking orders though they do not get them long ;

And he himself can sit them at water, rail and wall,  
So he's bound to be on four legs, for his mounts they never fall.

He likes a lot of jumping; and loves to give a lead—  
He never loved the craven or the currish skirter's creed.

But an hour's good running leaves him content and well disposed,  
A happy man for one day, and his hunting then is closed.

A second horseman meets him with a fresh one on the road,  
And he springs on him and canters straightway for his abode.

The Castle gates fling open/ to receive the gallant pair,  
By a groom the steed is taken, and the peer struts up the stair.

A flunkey pulls his boots off, and he himself his 'breeks,'  
To get inside a lounge-suit, which he'll only wear for weeks,—

For Farrington's the man for the tailor's artful trade,  
And is good at giving orders—though his bills are rarely paid.

Then he sits him down to poached eggs, and smokes a long cigar  
In his sanctum till the evening before a roaring fire.

But he's good at giving orders, and the valet knows the time  
When the peer will change for dinner by the ancient hall-clock chime.

And he dines him with the parson, whose tongue's his special forte ;  
And they toast the King and Hunting till they both need some support  
(they have slipped under the mahogany).

But he's good at giving orders is Farrington the peer,  
So he tells the prattling parson to put him on his chair.

The parson hiccups, 'No, my lord—(hic!) I'm down below myself—  
If you want to mount the chair again you must get (hic!) up there  
yourself.'

So the footmen take his long shanks and the butler takes his head—  
And he gives no further orders till he finds himself in bed.

January 1909



## A London Wine-merchant's Address

Come, I'll show you some elegant wines of Rothschild's growth,  
Of generous, soft vinocities,  
Zion Melaga and Marsala, both  
Quite regular curiosities.  
Gonzalez sherry here you'll find from Spain,  
That was bottled in 'fifteen.  
But my choicest wines are port and dry champagne,  
Of best vintage ever been.

This grand old lawny port, matured in cask,  
Has a seal of greenish hue —  
To hear of which, and to hunt it down's a task  
Within the grip of few,  
So rare is it with flavour ~~more~~ fine, so nice,  
Not heavy nor yet heady;  
I purchased it at half the shipping price  
When prices were unsteady.

Mait's champagne you see in my grand yonder bin  
Is not for the laven sinner,  
But for the epicure to drink to win  
His appetite for dinner.  
A bankrupt agent's stock of claret's mine,  
Soft and velvety to taste,  
Stylish and pretty, bouquet sweet — a wine  
To take in no great haste.

That Highland whisky's bonded twenty years,  
It's mellow smooth and mild —  
A perfect revelation 'to calm your fears —  
It would not hurt a child!  
You say your friends are many, young and frisky —  
Well, you cannot here go wrong,  
For they'll so appreciate your old Scotch whisky  
That you will not keep it long!

The costs are low ; so order , not delaying ,  
At price unprecedented ;  
And I will give you credit and release from paying  
Just now , if you're pressed ;  
(In an undertone)  
And when the far off day of settling comes ,  
And your house is storm'd by bailiffs ,  
Drink all that's left , get drunk , and dream of sums  
Your "friends" might pay the bailiffs !

Please Note , the only wine to swallow during  
The Heat-wave , while it lasts ,  
Is my light still Moselle , renown'd for curing  
And for the man who fasts .

1910 or 1911  
(raigville : Blackhall  
Midlothian

To Humphrey Taylor, Ltd  
" Premier Liqueur Distillers of Great Britain "

The "Wines of Life" came not too late —  
And but for you I might have miss'd 'em .  
They stimulate , they fascinate —  
They recuperate the whole 'nervous system . \*

As she'd had a deal of work to bore her ,  
I gave a glass of it to Isa ,  
And can assure you your JUNORA  
Is a potent , prompt revitalizer .

B. X. 11

\* Lord Rosebery once said of Burns's assertion , "A man's a man  
for a' that" , that "it binds , it heals , it revives , it invigorates ." (I read  
this for the first time on December 11, 1925.)





The one not brought about the war,  
and the one not won it.

The following words will be printed beneath the design:  
a gallant knight going forth to battle against the dragon  
a dragon that is lurking, waiting for a killing  
man, who is a villain.

Thus the design of the knight, at A.E. Moulton, who  
applied it to the war, the gallant knight, battle  
it out against Hitler and the Nazis during the Second  
World's War. 1944.





**V**ICIOUS SERPENT, SPITTING POISON !  
 MONSTROUS LAND AND WATER DRAGON !  
 TYRANNOSAURUS, FIERCER STILL,  
 REPTILE OF THE MESOZOIC ERA !  
 ALL THESE WORDS TOO MILD FOR THEE .

**H**ELLISH HUMAN, BREATHING BRIMSTONE,  
 STANDING AT THE HEAD OF MAMMALS  
 OF A NATION FOOLED TO DEATH !  
 THOU THYSELF SHOULD'ST SEE THE SLAUGHTER,  
 FEEL IT TOO, AND WRITME IN HELL !

207.34. - With Germany it is surely a case of out of the frying-pan into the fire. The last line but two of the above poem, which I wrote in 1917, may be applied to the present German nation with almost equal force. There is what - Mr George Lansbury, M.P., leader of the Socialist party (I myself remain what I've always been - a good Unionist) has just said of the German Dictatorship: "Every decent person detests all that Hitlerism stands for, but beyond Hitlerism is the great German nation. We don't - I know really what its opinions are. We only know that it is held as in a vice by ruthless brute force.... To read the story of the shootings was enough to make the most sanguine of us despair of human nature."



## To The Rescue Of The Belgians!

Forth, British Lion, to protect their wives  
And children, all in danger of their lives.  
Go, save their cattle from the Eagle's-maw,  
Go, pounce upon the scoundrels with thy paw —  
The lance of Lancer and the sabre bright  
Of Scottish Garry, both edged for the fight.  
Up, British Lion, up! and crunch the foe,  
That ruthless Uhlaus may thy prowess know;  
Hear not their squealing, spear them to the earth;  
Show them that that is all their souls are worth!

14.8.14  
Camond Bridge

## The Young Men's Answer to Kitchener's Call To Arms — Aug. 1914

("When Duty whispers low, Thou must,  
The youth replies, I can."

When Duty whispers low, "Ye must"  
The youths reply, "We can and will  
Respond to meet our country's need,"  
Mindful of each past glorious deed,  
Ignoring human praise and meed,  
Whether smooth the way or the fight-uphill!  
The youths obey, — in God's their trust!

believe I am  
right in saying  
that this was  
the very first  
rhyme about  
the Great War  
written by anyone  
in Scotland at all.  
I had seen none  
of any earlier  
date written in  
England, though  
I expect the volume  
some a bit earlier.  
The War started on  
the 4th August.

14.8.14  
Imperial.

## A Queen of Domesticity — The ex-Kaiserin (d. April 11. 1921)

"Children, Church and Kitchen" —  
All she lives in life!  
Scarcely a mate bewitching  
For an Emperor's wife?

12.4.21



# What To Do With The Kaiser

To our warriors on sea and land - Aug. 15. 1914

Fear him not, this Lord of Kiel! -  
Fear no more "The Mad Dog's" tread -  
A demon's murderous sway!  
Prick him with your arms of steel,  
Hound him all the way!  
Crush his power on sea and land -  
Quench the flame the Kaiser fann'd!

He it was, on us who war'd;  
Belgium first hit back and scor'd,  
Then the injured French.  
At him now with British sword  
And pin him in his trench!  
Crush his power on sea and land -  
Quench the flame the Kaiser fann'd!

Hound him round with shot and shell;  
Catch him, scare him - hear him yell! -  
Quarter? - none for him -

Tyrant, murderer, fit for Hell!  
Strip him, make him swim  
As best he can for St. Helena,  
So his soul be wash'd the cleaner!  
Crush his power on sea and land -  
Quench the flame the Kaiser fann'd!

On the eve of "The World's Greatest Battle", lines written  
in the train while travelling over the Forth Bridge in sight  
of eight or ten torpedo-boats steaming out to the North Sea,  
and Territorials with their recently sprung up batteries  
in readiness for any attempt on the part of the German fleet  
to rush the Forth. A very stirring spectacle.



## FOOD FOR HELL'S OVEN THE KAISER

*'He has sown dishonour, and he shall reap distrust'*

**I**F a man's no love for the life of a man,  
What love will he have for a city?  
What love for an old collegiate church?—  
Not an atom, not even his pity!

He may say he has, and a 'bleeding heart,'  
When we're near enough to him to get him;  
But he'd raze a church and murder a man—  
And a woman too if we'd let him.

His troops to his order have done all three,  
And the 'world and his wife' must suffer.  
A craven at heart, as his villainy shows,  
The man in himself is a duffer—

A duffer, a fool, a contemptible wretch,  
Whom the Devil himself couldn't pardon,  
But would open his hottest of ovens and *there* ✱  
Make him Lord of his lot and Chief Warden!

21.9.14

(1.2.45)  
A leader writer to  
the Times 19 Sept. has  
this: "German fright-  
fulness in the last  
Great War, ghastly  
through some of its  
outrages were, was only  
a misdeed compared  
with the scientific  
and planned brutality  
for which the Allies  
must this time exact  
retribution."

1.2.45

## THE GERMANS AND THEIR WAR-LORD

*'Hitherto we have called destructive barbarians Huns.  
Henceforth they shall be called Germans'*

**S**O far their nickname's been the Bloody Huns;  
Henceforth let them retain the name Germans—  
The bloodiest of the two Barbarians.

Deceit once marked the noble House of Fraser,  
When Lovat thought to make himself some hay, sir—  
But, bless me, Simon pales before the Kaiser!

71

✱ However we may wish a sole when fried  
let no Englishman ever say he wished to  
save the Kaiser's soul from frying over  
Hell's fire. (Paraphrase of an epigram  
written by Mark Lemon in 1864.)

10.12.17. — many  
aristocrats and clergymen might be described as 'pro-  
German' and, just as they did in the case of  
the 'Huns of State' written by Ernst Lissauer, the German-Jewish  
poet, who had such a violent and wide popularity in Germany  
and other countries. I gather that Lissauer, who has (just died) and  
exile in Vienna, was sorry for "Gott Strafe England" and that in  
1929 he announced his firm renunciation of the ideas which had inspired  
the 'Huns of State', though he declared that it had been written "in  
the belief that England really meant to strangle Germany."  
Of course, it was an absurd ~~statement~~ but it has been a  
his name should be associated with it, of hatred, death and destruction.







The Body-snatcher Snatched —  
The Dream of M.B.C.M.

"Great Scot! Burke's gone — the Devil! —  
The body-snatcher snatched! —  
The pride of our museum too!  
And so far no one's caught."

"What will was Mister Simpson,  
The erst Curator, say  
I hear he's blamed for being one-eyed  
And hears of this to-day?"

Now young F — was fond of drawing,  
And thought of the bones of Burke,  
So slipped into the museum,  
Where he knew no Bobbly looked.

The large glass doors were open;  
From the hook on which they hung,  
He'd only just to snatch 'em,  
And then the door was done.

In a room upstairs brown paper  
He put upon the floor  
And on this he laid the skeleton  
Which soon a jacket wore;  
He bore away the parcel  
To his "digg" in Forrest Road,  
Hard by the University  
And there laid down his load.

F — then began to sketch him  
And he sketches till night is dead, —  
But he missed him in the morning —  
The bloody Burke had fled!

Said Curator to Professor\*  
"Our dear old Burke's come back —  
The bones of the great body-snatcher  
Are here upon the rack!"

\* Sir William Turner  
Principal of Edinburgh University.

## Britain's Science

German spirit! German culture! — ~~culture~~ <sup>our culture!!</sup> culture? —  
Is that culture — prying like a culture ~~and a state so weak and small~~  
On a state so weak and small?  
The world will see that British spirit, British science,  
Showing still a just and rare defiance,  
Brings about the Tyrant's fall.

17.9.14



## The Duty of the German People

To our Vanguard

If thou hast a love or favour,  
Either for this realm or prince,  
We beseech thee check his hands,  
Turn his muscles into mines.

All the poetry of the German race seems to  
have died out — there is no truth  
left in them, no purity, no love, unless  
it burns still in the hearts of those who would  
bring the Kaiser to his senses. These  
should force him to give up the game of chance,  
and if he won't,

They must flatten the heart of that Sire,  
And mine up the meat of young Willie,  
For they lay down the lance for the lyre  
And cover the sword with the lily!

27.X.16



## The Last Post

I never shall forget those solemn, simple calls  
That fluttered through the fans of England's <sup>old</sup> ~~great~~ St-Paul's,  
~~tingling the very~~ <sup>that</sup> ~~glad up~~ the heart of every mourner there,  
That ~~through~~ <sup>while thinking of</sup> the dead who'd their gallant share.  
(done)

25.6.19

London — After the service, "in memory  
of all ranks of the R.A.M.C."



At playing double—Gad ! he'd seem the worst—  
In devilish tricks he ranks *the very* first,  
Does yon black villain with the name accurst !

A student of King Attila of old,  
The Kaiser's self long since to lust was sold,—  
The lust that fashions the inglorious bold ;

And he, inglorious, must to dust be hurled,  
Beneath the shameless flag that's now unfurled,  
An enemy to self and all the world.

12.9.14

## ALAS, FOR POOR BELGIUM !

**K**AISER WILLIAM and his horde of bullies have left their marks  
where'er they've been,  
Marks on person, marks on soil and city, such as no man's  
ever seen—

No man in the times we live in, no man in the ages far behind ;—  
Never had it come, this waste and carnage, in a *dream* to mortal mind.

But the *undream*'d came to us as real—fact, not fancy—grim and  
sickening  
Deeds of battle, soul-deep sunk in all who fought and saw the  
thickening

On the field of dead and dying, shatter'd with the fatal shell—  
Ah ! the awful battles waged there, leaving earth no better than a hell !

17.9.14

## 'SHELLTRAP' FARM, IN FRANCE

**N**O peaceful plough moves over the land,  
No team goes leisurely by,  
No grain is sown with a cheerful hand,—  
The seed that takes root must die.

K

The murderous guns rain shell from the steep—  
Such a scene is beyond your ken ;  
The fields are hurriedly ploughed and deep,  
But the seed is—the bodies of men.

29.9.16

## WE DINE WITH PRIDE

[Lines inspired by Lord Rosebery's after-dinner speech at the Holborn  
Restaurant on St. Andrew's Day.]

*To the Scottish Fighting Lad*

**T**O-NIGHT we lift our hands in joy,  
Our souls are warm and glad,  
And side by side  
We dine with pride  
To toast the Scottish Lad.

Our troops have earned their General's praise—  
No braver to be had ;  
And with them all  
To stand or fall  
Is many a Scottish Lad.

Though plunged in wars and deep regret,  
Already more than sad,  
We will not grieve  
Since we believe  
In each braw Scottish Lad ;—

With Scottish pride we hear him now,  
Outside in tartan clad—  
His steady tramp—  
The manly stamp  
Of each armed Scottish Lad.





An Impromptu Letter (written in the mind, but not left behind) to an impatient, rude lady (?), suspected by us of being too fond of the bottle, who, for certain reasons best known to herself, gave X — and I (we had been waiting for her to come in) the slip.

Dear Mrs C —

How softly you tread !

But for the sight  
of your ugly old head  
you might have been light  
in your old feather bed !

But we heard you come in,  
and you heard we were there ;  
we heard not your flitting,  
though we saw you appear  
From where we were sitting —  
Conveniently near :

You thought to escape us,  
so you did ; but we saw  
you slip out, like a sneak,  
leaving open the door  
For fear it should creak, —  
So we'll know you no more !

### A Thief's Soliloquy

Shot in the heart by a bullet\*  
There as she scrapes at the bed ;  
That is an end to the pullet —  
Now for the dinner ahead !

25.8.20

{ A good many people, Erica included,  
are complaining just now of losing  
their fowls. }

\* The slug of an airgun



The Royal Scottish Corporation !  
To which I superadd,  
In soldier's suit  
From brain to boot,  
The Scottish Fighting Lad !!

1.12.14

## A REMARK BY THE WAY

**T**HE only light !—transparent emerald and rose,  
As gems set in the grey ;—how like the flowers  
We've seen of Eglantine, set round with dewy green,  
That cross the shade of Craigie's lonely bowers.

Ah ! Jessie, would that yon proud patch of dawning light  
Might augur well for you and me and all—  
That through the gloom of these dark days might shine one ray  
Of hope of hastening on the Kaiser's fall !

23.9.15

## SOUNDS IN THE TRENCHES

**U**P shoots a lark to run through 'all his maze of melody,'  
And here the mavis pipes at dawn his lay right gleefully,  
While swifts on scythe-like wings go screaming as they wheel  
and dive

Across the hum of a myriad anxious workmen in this hive.  
'If music be the food of love, play on,' since these are sounds  
That come to keep the balance of the excited brain in bounds,  
Diverting heart and soul with all the warmth of feeling for  
The birds, which know, thank God ! far more of peace than fiendish  
war—

Up, lads !—Fix bayonets !—Charge ! . . . The birds are gone ; the  
cannons roar.

14.2.16

S NEDDON and Sheddon and Shanks  
 Are the names of three of my patients ;  
 Each quaffs my physic with thanks,  
 And feeds as he can on war rations !

11.12.17

## 'MADE IN GERMANY'

A PRISONER interned in our camp  
 Would have altered his fate  
 With a noose of new make  
 In the cell where he *thocht he wad dee*.  
 But he footed the floor with a stamp,—  
 The strain of his weight  
 Caused the braces to break—\*  
 They were 'made in Germany' !

2.7.16

## A BRITISH SOLDIER'S REFLECTION

O H, sweet at dawn o'er yonder 'no man's land'  
 The trilling laverock's note !—  
 But sweeter far the feeling at your thumbs  
 Of some big Boche's throat !!

1.8.16

## IMPROMPTU

S WEETER is fact than that which just seems—  
 Bagdad is taken !—the Kaiser's in screams—  
 Gone is the bottomest brick of his dreams ! †

11.3.17

\* The Boche had made use of his own pair of braces as a rope with which to hang himself, but failed in the attempt and brought the guard to his side.

†  
 "In 1890, when Bismarck (who did know when to stop)  
 told the Kaiser he had no place for the phrase "world domination"  
 in his vocabulary, he had to retire and make way for that  
 imperial mountebank. In 1933 a jack-in-the-box (from obscurity)  
 supplanted the Weimar Republic."  
 — R. C. Batesman, in the Daily Telegraph  
 (13.11.41)



# "Kissing The Rod"

(O/ ./. - IV - D.D. and myself)

In school days<sup>\*</sup> 'twas never my forte  
The learning of Latin by heart;  
I ~~never~~ <sup>rarely</sup> gave Horace a thought,  
So I tasted the classical smart! -

Deserting his bamboo cane  
For the twigs of a gracefuller tree  
(They were thought to be more humane),  
Joy christen'd the bundle on me.

Boys' brains he was famous for searching,  
He knew what each boy should be at;  
I bear him no malice for birching -  
I like him the better for that;

It did me no harm at the time -  
It did me some good, I dare say;  
And now that I'm well past my prime,  
It is amusing to think of <sup>that</sup> day. str.

18. 2. 07

Leamington College (1877-82)

\* At my first school, before I went to  
Uppingham (1882-1887).

I And to prove that what I write is true,  
and that my old head-master bore no  
malice towards me, I may add that, ~~more~~ <sup>exactly</sup>  
twenty years after I left that school, I went  
to stay at his house with a view of portraying  
him for Vanity Fair after he had just been  
appointed Head of one of our three greatest English  
Public Schools, and he good-humouredly fell in  
with my suggestion that a birch-rod over a copy  
of his reputation-book should take the place of  
a 'crest' in the top right hand corner of the  
cartoon. He was immensely pleased with its publication.

+ Harrow  
and wrote and  
with me that  
6.00.00 the  
1-14-00  
had the  
idea

Impromptu

At the Assembly Rooms and the Music Hall  
In the days of my youth, at many a ball,  
With the fairest of fair ones hand-in-hand,  
I danced to the music of Dambmann's Band.

---

Impromptu - on a postcard

To Edwin Alexander, M.S., R.S.A.,  
(a member of the Languishing-committee)  
What a treat to be free from Elections,  
Deeply engaged in <sup>numbers of</sup> elections,  
To get out of the row and the rabble  
And be quit of the speaker's gabble -  
Quite free from political fixtures!

---

1910

Gladstone's Chops

To my wife

What chops so nice as Gladstone's? -  
What chops so lean and sweet?  
What croaking like my Isabel's  
To make me take my meat -?

How rare it is for a butcher  
To serve a poor man well!

How rare it is for a poor man  
To boast of a cook like "Bell"!

Blackhall  
1910

---



# MEDITATION OVER A DEAD DONKEY

**L**AST night I saw him shivering, stiffening—dying.  
To-day his playmates, close beside him crying,  
Gaze on him cold and stiff and dead !  
' Remember death '—eternal rest ! To win it—  
With glory too—thousands this very minute  
Are just as cold and stiff and dead.

28.9.14

AN ANSWER FROM 'DEATH'S TRAP' OR 'RATSVILLE' (the two nicknames of Hugh's dug-out in the trenches, in France) concerning the matter of rat-catching at the Front :

**I** NEVER think of minding that—  
Though rats run in a heap—  
So long as I can lie me down  
And *catch* a wink of sleep.

14.5.16.

# REFLECTION OF A SAILOR, INVALIDED HOME

**S**TEADFAST as the lepas,  
Clinging close like ivy,  
Slaving hard to keep us  
Is my *guid auld wifie*. ❖

Washing all the daytime,  
Ironing on till night,  
Never knowing playtime—  
*She knows how to fight!*

(An honest share of useful work  
Is that which looks for nothing more—  
And rarely gets it further off  
Than at the doer's humble door.)

77

When I wrote these  
four lines I had not  
yet seen the "Lovers"  
and I did not know that  
the "Lovers" were not  
yet published. I had  
heard that the "Lovers"  
were not yet published.

"We labour today, and  
we shall be labouring  
strong horse and bridle  
— and who knows more?"

I read these lines for the  
first time in the "Lovers".  
I was very much interested in  
the "Lovers" and I had  
heard that the "Lovers"  
were not yet published.

\* Another champion of her cause is the renowned and good  
Sir Walter Scott. Did he not write in Ivanhoe these  
words? — "I tell thee, proud Templar, that not in thy  
fiercest battles hast thou displayed more of thy vaunted  
courage, than has been shown by woman when called  
upon to suffer by affection or duty."



## SONNET

### COMMANDEERED—THE PRIDE OF THE HUNT

A MONTH ago he stood at the covert-side,  
With hounds about his heels, the whole Hunt's pride,  
The prince of the Kennel Stud, so well, so keen,—  
Making the most of our horses look so mean.  
The huntsman had felt his power and the length of his stride,  
Never knowing him reckon a fence or a dyke too wide . . .  
And now—what is he now? A lifeless horse,  
The victim of a German shell—that source  
Of death to as many as cross its murderous flight :  
Dead, by a thousand others fallen in the fight  
On a redden'd Belgian field we none of us know,  
That as yesterday by the covert-side  
Was before us all,—the huntsman's pride,  
The pride of the Hunt of only a month ago.

21.9.14

## POOR DICK!\*

POOR Dick! he's down in the dumps and a-weeping :—  
She'd have him apply to the Meynell—  
She'd see him in breeches and clogs and a-sweeping  
The dung of a dog in his kennel!

Poor Dick?—lucky Dick!—better there than in trenches  
With Boches and brute Huns to hound him,  
'Midst slush and inevitable everyday stench  
~~From~~ And rotting of humans all round him. †

\* Lord Derby advocates the keeping up of foxhounds. But if a man a bit over service age turns up his nose at the thought of assisting a kennel-huntsman, he should, when labour at home is so hard to get, be made to sweep out the trenches. That is my opinion. The wives have sometimes more pluck than the husbands.

78

† In March, 1919, Siegfried Sassoon wrote his "Aftermath" in which are contained these lines :—

"Do you remember the rats, and the stench  
Of corpses rotting in front of the front-line trench—  
And dawn coming, dirty-white, and chill with a hopeless rain?  
Do you ever stop and ask, 'Is it all going to happen again?'"

Three years before Sassoon wrote these lines  
I wrote Poor Dick! (see date over the page).



# Old Age At The Covert-side

I } We once believed in the flying leap,  
 We loved ~~the~~ <sup>to</sup> galloping on,  
 We loved the look of the glittering pink  
 And the horses we rode upon.  
 We were wise, we were <sup>in love</sup> to love it all -  
 We were wise ~~to love~~ the chase  
 When young and rich to revel in what  
 A sportsman has to face.

II } But comes a time when the leap's too high  
 And the galloping on too rough,  
 When the pink's put by and the horses put down,  
 And we've followed the hounds enough.

(and) } The cry "gone away!" falls sweet on our ears,  
 Recalling departed joys;  
 We linger long by the covert-side  
 But ~~and though~~ <sup>our</sup> hearts <sup>are</sup> in front with the boys.

Published in 15. 3. 20  
 Daily's magazine (London) Dec 1920

## You for a Post! \*

To A Hampshire <sup>farmer</sup> acquaintance  
 Resisting springs and winds and rain  
 The Yew is stouter than the Lion;  
 A post of hardy Hampshire yew  
 Will long outlast a post of iron.  
 So use a yew whenever you can,  
 And prove yourself a Hampshire man.

As some <sup>should know,</sup> might suppose,  
 I did not incorporate ~~into~~  
 my own person <sup>ably</sup> into  
 this creation - up to the  
 time of writing I rode like  
 the devil at anything  
 and on anything whenever  
 an opportunity arose -  
 I had, too, only just  
 left the Cavalry  
 at a time when I  
 rode very  
 hard with the  
 Dragoon  
 The Bingles

Inhabitant of the  
 New Forest - a  
 scout to say will  
 post of yew will  
 outlast a post of  
 iron.

23.8.15

(Published in The Portsmouth Times  
 27.8.15)

\* At the beginning of the War  
 there was a big poster stuck  
 up everywhere - Kitchener and the words  
 "You for a post?"



# A Bishop on the Box

Inscribed to my father (act. 80) and sent  
with a memory sketch of his old coachman,  
Bishop by name, and the author of this rhyme,  
as a 'coll' seated on the box of the family  
waggonette.

To mind you of a bishop,  
In times when we were young,  
Who took us to an Abbey  
To hear the requiem sung.

A requiem is a death-song  
A "who-whoop!" is the same -  
And you're the sort of requiem  
For which we sometimes came!

The bishop was a Bishop,  
And fat though bold was he,  
Who loved to see a fox-chase,  
And so did you and we.  
But your pink coat's the best link with  
The days you never will rue -  
When with the game North New Wickshire  
And Fitts and all you flew;

So if you're still that pink coat  
Do, pray, just send it here,  
That I may mind the old days  
When you and I were near -  
Close to old Stonleigh Abbey <sup>†</sup>  
To see 'em kill a fox,  
You on your horse and I with  
A bishop on the box.

1913

Published in  
The South Essex Chronicle  
15 Dec 1922 #923

I possess a splendid  
cabinet photo of this  
old family servant,  
Bishop, taken of him  
in 1868. The year of his  
birth, just before  
served my father's  
service. \* See p. 57 ibid

† Tom Fitts, huntsman 1869-72. He afterward  
hunted the Quorn.

‡ Lord Leigh's place where the first meet of the  
season was always held.



Poor Dick ! Let him go to the hounds of the Meynell ;  
And then if his nose be too dainty,  
Send him bundling through France from the Derbyshire Kennel  
To besom out trenches in plenty !

27.3.16

## THE MASTER OF THE HORSE \*

*To the Rough-riders of the Remount Service*

As the glory of horses is he that has made 'em,  
Though they *have* had to suffer and *have* had to rough it ;  
So the horses he's made are the crown of the breaker,  
Who has tumbled for love just as much as for profit.

**H**ORSES, like men, need a fair bit o' schooling.  
Three things are certain whatever they say,  
Courage and kindness and patience you *must* have—  
*Breaking a horse is not done in a day.*

No matter what is his age or his temper,  
One method only for all in the main—  
Not *one* way with *one* horse and *one* with another—  
*Seek to get near the animal's brain.*

Instead of applying the whip and the rowel,  
Feel him as firmly with finger and knee,  
Speak to him coolly, coax him as kindly—  
Or maybe you 'll fly on the first bit o' lea !  
If you would master him, please, just remember  
To first teach yourself how to work and obey—  
Are the lazy and insolent best in the saddle  
When effort and duty ne'er come in their way ?

See to the grazing, the stabling and feeding ;  
Consider the sort of condition they're in—  
You like some comfort and good food to work on,  
*Then never work horses when poor and thin.*

\* Published in The Huddersshire Courier and in  
Baily's Magazine (London) in 1914 ; also in  
Horse Training, by Lieut. H. J. Bourke, R.A.  
(Hutchinson & Co., Ltd., 1928) ; and in my  
Hunting, Racing, Coaching and Boxing Ballads  
(Heath Cranton, Ltd., 1926.)



Know your horse first of all well in the stable,  
Then lead him out gingerly into the yard,  
Straight on to grass that is short and elastic—  
Never, to start with, on roads that are hard.

Take him in pasture and take him in stubble,  
Lead him to water, yourself going before  
To cross a small brook and tempt him with honey,  
Concealing the lash—or there's sure to be war.  
Next comes the saddling, the mounting and starting  
With maybe excitement for you and for all—  
The jibbing, the rearing and bucking and plunging—  
And *never you mind if it ends in a fall.*

Send him along at the bar to begin with,  
Raising it higher as he lifts up his legs,  
Let him feel what he knees is the toughest of timber—  
*Furze by itself's no better than eggs.*  
Jog him to meets where he'll be with his brothers  
To mix with some colour and hear the odd sounds ;  
The moment he dances don't turn his head homewards—  
But, by Jove ! *'keep his heels off the huntsman and hounds !*

Lend the young stranger the rein for a moment—  
Play with his nature—and see what he'll do ;  
Sure, if you bear on him, jag him and saw him,  
There *may* be a wide gap atween him and you !  
If *he* gets a hold as you're going to covert,  
And *you* are not feeling as fit as you should,  
Give him three turns round a plough with its furrow—  
It might tend to ~~alter~~ his fidgety mood !

*flatten*

Some are for thrashing and 'running 'em done,'  
Those that have taken to bolt or to kick ;  
Others, with Galvayne, would humour their hearing :  
*Many a good 'un is spoiled with the stick.*  
When he's done right he should know you commend him,  
Make him uncomf'table if not, of course ;  
But you *must* let him see you've a right to be master,  
So *break in yourself—then break in the horse.*



# My Old Nursery

I want to see old Binswood\* once  
more before I die;  
I want to see its nursery, where I would  
laugh and cry  
where all of us built houses with bricks  
of wooden ware —  
and never thought of castles built only  
in the air;  
where each one found a playmate, — for all  
went smoothly there, —  
and where I was taught the alphabet on a  
high-backed baby-chair.

I'd love to take my boy there (he's just as  
keen and bold)  
And see him ride the rocking-horse like me  
in days of old: —  
Bare-backed, without the irons, I'd ride that  
dappled horse  
For days and days together — and never off the  
course;  
'Twas he that taught me balance, and he that  
saw me slip —  
I could ride without the reins then, and never  
used a whip.

Now Binswood is a girls' school, a stranger  
troads the floor,  
And the name is changed to Clarendon —  
I may never see it more.  
The Nursery's now a bedroom; the wooden  
bricks are burnt —  
The rocking-horse is broken, and the lessons —  
are they learnt —  
The lessons we were taught there by the best of  
nurses going? —  
You grant that I may meet her when the Reaper's  
done his mowing.

\* Binswood House, Lamington, became my father's property in 1868, the year I was born, and it is still his (January 1915). Since 1882 he has let it to various tenants, including the late Earl of Southesk, the late Marquis of Ailesbury, Major Ashburn Master of the N. Warwickshire, and the late Lord Lawrence Dunsany.



And may I see the mother\* who brought  
 me to my birth  
 An angel now 'above' me, once the  
 gentlest soul on earth —  
 I never knew a sweeter, a dearer one  
 than thee;  
 Thy early call from Jesus made a difference  
 to me!  
 Oh! I want to see the nursery where I would  
 laugh and cry  
 I want to see old 'Binswood' once more  
 before I die.

31. 12. 11

Craigville

Blackhall: Midlothian.

Nie

\* Isabel Crawshaw, daughter of Francis Crawshaw  
 Esq., of Treforest, S. Wales, and Broadbourne Hall,  
 Sevenoaks. She died in 1876, at Kennington  
 Hall, near Ashford, Kent. She was the grand-  
 daughter of William Crawshaw, Esq., of Cyfarthfa  
 Castle, near Merthyr Tydfil — one of the Crawshays  
 referred to by George Borrow in his Wild  
 Wales. Her father was a 1<sup>st</sup> <sup>once removed</sup> cousin of the late  
 Lord Zlanover, and a 3<sup>rd</sup> cousin of the first  
 Lord Stanusk, and a 2<sup>nd</sup> <sup>1<sup>st</sup></sup> cousin of Amelia (dan.  
 of Will<sup>m</sup> Thompson Esq., of Underley Hall, Westmorland,  
 Lord Mayor of London) wife of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Marquis of  
 Headfort and grandmother of The Lady Henry Cavendish-  
 Bentinck, of Underley.

### A Parody on Eight Lines of Burns's Address to Edinburgh

Here William Clarke\*, with eagle eyes,  
 Seeks science in his cozy abode;  
 And kindness, 'neath his native skies,  
 High holds he when he feeds the load —,  
 But cometh not the writer's road!

June, 1916

I presented a three-guinea commission — a bookplate — for Mr William  
 Eagle Clarke, LL.D., F.R.S. Edinburgh, in 1915. Having been carried away  
 with the subject — a Natural History one — I spent 3 weeks over the very  
 large drawing, which I valued at £25 at least. But as a bargain's a bargain  
 with me, I did not ask for more. I did, however, ask him to give me  
 half a dozen of the prints after it (value 4 each). He promised to give me three, but

William Eagle Clarke,  
 Director of the Natural  
 History Department  
 of the Royal Museum,  
 Edinburgh, a very  
 manly spirit,  
 fellow, a great friend  
 of the Duchess of  
 Bedford, who  
 was lost  
 with her  
 aeroplane.

I never got more than one out of him!  
 His motive in getting me to do it was  
 to enhance his books on Birds,  
 which he had put up by auction shortly  
 after he had pasted in the book plates, and they fetched seven (hundred) pounds.



## TO THE CANADIANS, AFTER A BIG BATTLE

**T**EMPERED by tears and welded in fire,  
Battered by strokes of doom,  
Well was it hardened—harder than wire—  
The will that was born in the womb. ✕

Canadians have shown it, regardless of ill,  
Well by the work they've done.  
Thanks for the women, thanks for the will—  
British Dominions have won!

1917

## AFTER THE STORM

**A**YE, after the storm now comes a calm,  
When music and poetry breathe their balm,  
When tongues are soft and low.

The winds play havoc in wood and dell,  
But a mind may convert the home to a hell,  
As some ~~will~~ have sorrow to know.

8.12.17

## RE ARMENIA

**W**E'LL spring upon the Teuton octopus,  
That circles round the Armenian land;—  
Let's hack those Hunnish tentacles to bits  
And crush his suckers in the sand!

If not, the sicken'd Turk will gain his feet,—  
Then rape and butchery once more.  
*The Crescent and the Iron Cross shall know  
The feeling of the Lion's paw!*

December 1917

L

81

*I read this for the first time to day (S. 9. 54) when  
praising Shakespeare's Henry IV :—  
"Forthwith a power of English shall we levy,  
Whose arms were moulded in their mothers' womb  
to chase these pagans...."*

## THE FLAGS OF FRANCE

**S**TILL France with bleeding hands can hold aloft  
Her battered flags of freedom,  
Which no profane and Hunnish hands  
Shall e'er defile, or need 'em ;—

The Prussian fist is growing powerless,  
The Teuton soul is sighing ;  
And France will see them still unfurled  
Above the tyrants dying.

4.9.18

## 'DEATH AND GLORY'

A LANCER'S LAST REFLECTIONS ✕

**A**MIDST deafening explosion of shrapnel,  
Closed in by dead men and graves,  
I sigh for the sands and the shingle,  
For the tall white cliffs and the caves  
That still in my memory echo  
The roar of the ocean's waves.

I hate all the horrors around me,  
And yearn for my brave one and wise ;  
I long for her olive complexion,  
Her dark, dark languishing eyes,  
Her form more graceful in motion  
Than any conceived in the skies. . . .

Another big army is on us,  
And we're only beginning to ride :  
The cry 'Death and Glory' was shouted  
By the Colonel—a corpse at our side—  
So we rose in our stirrups and galloped  
Clean over the trench in our stride.

82

✕ "Every man thynke on hys true love,  
And make hym to the Treenite :  
For to God I make myne avowe  
Thys day wyl I not fle."

— From "The Battle of Otterbourne."

21.12.41  
I had never read  
these lines before  
to-day.



## The Builder of Birsay

Robert Stewart - Abbot - Earl -  
Earl of Orkney, 'tyrant', churl,  
Wicked man of proud demeanor,  
Son of a king but not of a queen,\*  
Raised a stately palace there,  
And made it strong and made it fair,  
Fairer than the first had been,  
Where the coast is wildest seen.  
He built it of Orcadian stones  
And mortar dyed with Orkney blood,  
Shed amidst the smothered means  
Of free-born Udalles as they stood  
Slaving at the Birsay palace  
Neath the rod of pride and malice,  
And kept them toiling till they dropt,  
For the last string-course was lopp'd.  
But his name in memory -  
Lives in the twentieth century -  
By the free-born Orkney nation  
Still is held in execration:  
Telling of a proud pretender §  
Birsay's ruins yet remain  
Memorial of a place of splendour  
Shrouded with a pall of pain.

\* "The Earl was no more ashamed of his unchurch'd birth" we are told, "than of his tyranny, for over the arch of the palace gateway he caused to be hewn the words, 'Dominus Robertus Stewartus, Filius Jacobi Quinti, Rex Scottorum, hoc opus instruxit', a statement containing a gross grammatical error, which was to cause the proud Earl much trouble hereafter." [It should read Regis not "Rex".]

§ I have called Robert, Earl of Orkney, a pretender, in as much as he had no legal claim on any part of Orkney. He was the natural son of James V. He died in 1591. His son and grandson were beheaded in Edinburgh in 1615.



## At Ratho Hall in War-time

What muster of peacocks! what building of tocks!  
What a flight of the "Nuns" that we read of in books!  
What yelping of puppies! what barking of dogs!!  
As we near the Miss Thomsons - now sawing up logs!

What Turkish tobacco to fly to the core!  
What tea and what cream without sugar - O War!  
What scones and what butter! what raspberry jam!  
What currents of rain to get home in - O Damn!

21. ix. 18

## The Critics

I care not a curse for the critics -  
I delight in being brave to the bone:  
I work, and I work for the pleasure  
And I know best what's best of my 'own.

Am I slave to a damned set of idlers -  
The pimples that worry the skin?  
If I ~~was~~<sup>were</sup> I'd be fitful and frantic  
And never know where to begin!

I laugh up my sleeve at the devils  
I give one and all a wide berth  
And stick to my own simple methods -  
I know what the critics are worth!

5. xi. 16

To the memory of one of my hunters.

My buried desire's not a thoroughbred horse,  
Not a son of a "Scotch" nor yet of "La Flèche",  
Not a mate of "Perimmon", the best off the course,  
The price of all these was well out of my reach.

My choice was a half-bred at which you'd not scoff,  
With a trace of old "Stockwell" and "Valley" strain  
Running cool in his veins, to kiss him well off  
From the rack - to hold his head high on the plain.

January 1909.



And love is lost sight of as glory  
Comes madly between her and me—  
Oh, the madness of war and the folly !—  
But what joy to see tyranny flee !  
I ride to my grave full of honour,  
Though I leave her alone by the sea.

23.4.18

## ‘SOLUM OMNE FORTI PATRIA EST’

**W**HEN native woods wave round us, and streams throw back  
the blue  
Of a summer sky above us, we feel we're brave and true.

When twig and branch scream o'er us in a land that's strange and cold,  
And darkening floods heave by us, seem we so true and bold ?

The brave man is the braver ; the craven proves his name :  
In every clime and climate brave men show up the same.

11.3.18

## THE COMING OF THE STARS AND STRIPES

**W**E will never be squeezed (as the Kaiser thought),  
Never till life be done,  
Beneath the heel of the German boot—  
Under the bloody Hun.

Yankees are with us—they mean to win ;  
Thousands have now begun  
To rip the heel from the German boot  
And butcher the bloody Hun.

July 1918

Eight Germans he punctured and left them for dead,  
And gamely came back with his bayonet red !

## THE PLAIN UNVARNISHED TRUTH

**A**N artist only to myself, to men  
As useless as the easel there alone—  
The three-legg'd, well-worn oaken frame  
Without a stand, propp'd up by a weighted chair,—  
The weight, a hat-box loaded with a stone.

No coroneted note comes more to me—  
No proud commission wets my needy brush :  
The stables once that breathed of sport,  
Now empty, tell another, bitter tale,—  
All, all on war are bent—one valiant rush.

No publisher, no editor will spend  
A single cent on *me*—photographers  
Now line their tills. The Arts and Crafts  
Have scarce the work to employ a waning staff,  
As orders cease and trade grows worse and worse ;

I've tried the field of Pottery without  
Success ; I've waited at a Graver's door,  
To hear his artist took 'French leave'  
To 'decorate' the Huns, and left no work—  
Each firm had all but rotted to the core.

The work Thou gav'st me here to do is done—  
I've done my little best. . . . To arms ! and fling  
The life Thou lend'st me back to Thee  
In battle 'gainst a savage foe, and die  
The envied death for Country and for King !

I'll fling away my life in gratitude  
To Thee,—Thou bidd'st me leave the world this way,  
Thus heaping riches on my head—  
A crown of glory shared by thousands more  
Who willingly give up 'life's little day.'



## "The Pans"

O for a breath of Kintyre —  
A whiff of the western waves! —  
There's where my heart liss, there on the lillie soil.  
Brains and the rest o' me here must forever spoil; —  
My heart's in a nest by the waves of the west,  
There where the ocean laves,  
Close to the Mull o' Kintyre.

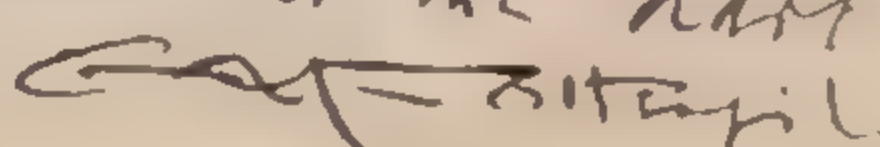
O for the links of Kintyre,  
The scent of the thyme-covered sand! —  
There's where my zeal liss, there by the swift-running ball.  
Head an' the hands o' me meet with a crushing fall  
When I think of the friends and the thin shaft that bends,  
Far from this Lowland land,  
Close to the Mull o' Kintyre.

O for a sight of Kintyre  
Seat of the ancient clans! —  
There's where my dreams are, there by the door of a cot:  
Heart an' the head an' the hands o' me all forgot  
But for one casual meeting, one kindly greeting,  
There at the old Salt pans,  
Close to the Mull o' Kintyre.

25. 2. 16

 J. M. Gill

[Published in Golfing,  
Nov. 1922]

— The bravest man, when conscience stabs <sup>his</sup> heart,  
Is coward still 'till he plucks out the <sup>^</sup> dart.  
J. 2. 20  J. M. Gill



## An Outcast - an analogy

There's a want o' rest in those sea-birds,  
As they hover in hundreds above him;  
There's a want o' rest in his bosom,  
As he longs for the someone to love him.

<sup>when</sup> ~~As~~ they swoop to the ground, still unsettled,  
<sup>when</sup> ~~As~~ the air whispers storm-winds are looming;  
<sup>when</sup> ~~As~~ he turns him, still comfortless, nowhere,  
His thoughts tell him no one is coming.

They will die in the open forgotten,  
With the leaves just to cover the bone;  
So may he, p'raps, an outcast neglected -  
In death, as he lived, all alone!

1910

At "Rest and be thankful" (!),  
Crostorphine Hill, by Blackhall.

[I could see by the look of the poor wretch he did not  
know which way to turn and where he would  
be going and what his end would be. How many  
there must be in the world of the utterly outcast-tribe!  
And I believe some of them are not exactly their own  
enemies - unkindness and injustice on the part  
of others, often those nearest akin to them, had con-  
verted them into outcasts.]

## Utter Remoter - an outcast's Reflection

I am not what I might have been,  
I am not what I even was once;  
There is no one on whom I can lean,  
And the world looks on me askance:  
I know by its face that it hates me,  
And thinks me beyond recall;  
Yet I know that it much underates me,  
And has helped to hurry my fall.

24. 12. 10





## A Horse-lover's Penalty

I sighted her far on ahead,  
In the shafts of a Newington butcher's van,  
A mare I knew well, but never the man:—  
Long ago I was told she was dead.

The curl and the cock of those ears  
Were no other's, ~~the~~ <sup>and</sup> carriage of head and the tail;  
And as memory flashed back to the day of her sale  
My eyes were welling with tears.

I tugged to the side of the mare,  
I looked the old huntress all now and now;  
A stranger for aye to carrots and clover  
I saw in the bones that were bare.

But I pensioned her off on the lea,  
There <sup>was</sup> none in the past to outpace her;  
My "Beauty", I longed then and there to embrace her—  
She was still the same sixpence to me.

I smoothed down her poor lean neck;  
Then struggled away with a sigh and a groan  
To wish—yes, indeed—she were once more my own,  
That grass-smitten, pitiful ~~wreck~~!

17.3.17

—  —  
Othello

"The Limit"; or, Jamie's Complete Wardrobe

A "Dicky" for a shirt  
And an old woman's skirt  
Cut into coat and breeches,  
With a patch upon the seat  
(Where Daddy used to beat)  
Darned with a myriad stitches!

8.8.22









## His Last Silent Wish

[Recalling the action of Lawrence Edward Grace Oates,  
of the Inniskilling Dragoons, on the homeward journey  
of the Scott Antarctic Expedition, 1912.]

'I'm going outside, and I may be sometime.'

He sailed the sea with never a human shore,  
He tramped a land unknown before,  
To win ambition's Southern Pole  
And make a Briton's name the mightier.  
And when he'd reached the long-sought goal,  
A fame was his still brighter —  
To save his friends he gave his soul —  
Young Oates had courted death amid the snow  
To give those comrades one more glow  
Of hope — to make their burden lighter.  
And he — a nation's great physician —  
He, as he died, would have you say, "I can,  
I will, in this my mortal span,  
Both live and die" A VERY GALLANT GENTLEMAN."

March  
1913

Upon the completion of a picture (a miniature portrait group) which  
had turned out successfully, but part of which had given me more trouble  
and anxiety than anything I'd ever done, and I was weak with influenza too.

I thank the Lord for gladness, —  
I know my hand was led by Him  
When the flesh was weak and vision dim  
And the soul was full of sadness.

27.8.21

The Pest of the "Rockies", Braid Hills Golf Course, Edinburgh.

This time my ball's safe past the "Rockies"! though close  
to them scatter'd with caddies and snatchers all eyeing  
the 'challengers', 'captains' and 'colonels' a-flying  
Too near them for safety — their eyes like the nose  
of a hound (quite as keen) but with lips that are lying  
Concerning the balls they've been stealing (not buying)  
To sell to those golfers so full of their wares!

26.8.09





EDINBURGH  
T. AND A. CONSTABLE  
Printers to His Majesty

Captain R. F. Scott, R.N., wrote in his journal, about March 16, 1912,  
 "The [Captain] Nares went out into the blizzard and we have  
 not seen him since. We know that poor Nares was walking  
 to his death, but though we tried to dissuade him we  
 knew that it was the act of a brave man and an English  
 gentleman. We all hope to meet the end with a similar spirit,  
 and assuredly the end is not far off."

From the time of leaving the Pole Scott seems to have been oppressed  
 with a feeling of anxiety. On March 3 he wrote: - "God help us.  
 We can't keep up this pulling - that is certain. Amongst ourselves  
 we are unendingly cheerful, but what each one feels in his heart I can  
 not guess." Three days later Captain Nares, whose feet had been for  
 some time past badly frost-bitten, and were daily getting worse, was  
 unable to pull. On March 16 Nares could go no further.

I believe it was the search-party, who, about November 1912, after they had  
 found the tent - where Scott and his companions lay dead - that put up a  
 post with these four words upon it to the names of the men. Properly speaking I should  
 omit the word "and" to make the phrase correct.



## The Best and The Worst of The Turf

The needy and the sordy and the seamy side, we're taught,  
Are oftener more concerned with the odds than with the sport;  
As a welsher tips the <sup>& palisade</sup> ~~palisade~~ to catch an early train,  
They stick at nothing evil for the sake of sordid gain.

The crowd that goes horse-racing is a motley one at best,  
Yet the few above suspicion alone for all the rest;

For the <sup>magnate (not a mushroom)</sup> ~~mountain~~ and the manly side, we know,  
Are more concerned with jockeys and the horses that <sup>will</sup> ~~must~~ go.

Sept. 1920

## Impromptu - Still Hock

Ach! Schloss Johannesburg! of greatest breed  
(at thirty 'bob' a bottle!),  
What elegance and richness unsurpassed  
For slipping down the throttle!

A wine-merchant's address to a Cavalry Regiment  
Ye sportsmen & fighting-men who've done your bit,  
Come, taste this velvet wine of great renown,  
And drown your grief in soft Chateau Laffitte  
(quite "fit for use and well worth laying down").

Mind ye, wherever through Chablis ye may roam,  
There's none, ye'll find, to beat Monsieur Labaume.

20. 12. 20

Twenty shillings, about six and ninepence  
A correspondent writes - I see by the papers to day that the new silver coins will be issued on Monday, and that they are to contain for every 725 parts silver of the old issue 500 in the new, which is practically half the quantity of silver. I tried to make a quatrain about this, but there is no word in the language to rhyme with silver, so I had to be content with these lines:-  
The coins of worthmeable metal  
Henceforth will be minted this way -  
With half the amount of the silver  
There is in our silver to day -  
And may all have the shillings to pay!  
G. A. F.  
After the action of President Cleveland.

925

The Evening  
Dispatch  
Edinburgh  
11.12.20



## Swanston's Peaceful Ruralness In Memory of R. L. S.

O how can man expect by fairlies  
To medicine a heart-sick mind's disease?  
When inspiration dies, there comes a lull,  
With all the soul's poetic fire extinguish'd.  
But a spark would fall on his combustible,  
Imagination (not as yet relinquish'd)  
And set it in ablaze to burn afresh.  
The quiet healthful joys of country life,  
Removed from all distraction and from strife,  
From rounds of doudgey and dissipation,  
Of Edinburgh (dinners and prolong'd prolation,  
Alone could cure and give his soul its rest.  
And so he'd leave the town, and hide as best  
He could in Swanston's peaceful ruralness.

R. L. Stevenson At Swanston

In student days he lived at  
A cottage in the hills,  
Beside the "Seven Sisters" \*  
With their scars and little rills.  
There the cooing of the rock-door,  
The cawing of the rooks,  
The wail of the plaintive plover,  
Gave him relish for his books,  
As he wander'd round old Swanston  
To improve his wearied looks.


\* The local name for Caerkeston

Instead of knuckle music\*

To rouse him from his sleep,  
He'd hear a cackling fender  
And bleating of the sheep,  
The low of many oxen,  
The crowing of the cocks,  
And cry of a distant shepherd  
Echoing from the rocks,  
With the yapping of his collie  
Amongst the Pentland flocks.

And he'd soon be by his window  
With paper, pen and ink  
In touch with wondrous nature  
And endow'd with brains to 'link  
Those sights and sounds together  
In essays for the press,  
All other authors noting  
And dreaming of success;—  
But Louis' laws were Nature's  
And conscientiousness.

And here's the hillside garden  
Where grew his fellowships —  
"It's indeed a place to enter  
With a song upon our lips";  
And here's the sacred quarry  
Curtain'd with clematis,  
Where rock-plants from the mountain  
Remind us of the Swiss,  
And where Louis, bathed in sunshine,  
Had worked in rural bliss.



\* The familiar housemaid's knock



How I gained the Hall but lost  
the Pedigree

"What the use," said an old grey man one day,  
"Of that pedigree there as broad as it's long,  
when you've bills to settle and rent to pay? —  
You've wasted your time — what you've done is wrong!"  
And he turned from the vellum sheet I adorn'd  
To think of the woman he'd long since mourn'd.

"What's the use?" mutter'd I — "Why, there's plenty of use  
In an old pedigree — more use than you'd think  
In a line of proud Barons, back'd up by a mass  
Of Elizabeth's reign, and myself as a link  
With the past — ah! there's use in a pedigree —  
And you'd think so too if you were me."

"Yes, perhaps, if it's proven — but what if it's not? —  
Here's a document — here that'll set you at rest —  
Look at it, read it, find that it's not  
What they've written in all those books! — The best  
We can say is, you've some of the blood, — not all,  
And that, legally speaking, you own the Hall! —

"This is better than pedigree — here, take this,"  
Said the old grey man, as he gave me his own  
Short will with a quivering hand, "and I wish  
You to LEAVE YOUR NAME AND YOUR LINE ALONE."  
With these his last words, he stagger'd and fell,  
And left me aghast to fathom the spell.

"I'm to change my name, then, and think no more  
Of my own descent, and forever forget —  
The quarter'd and quarterly arms I bore, —  
As I thought — by right. Oh! how can I let  
My natural pride do that, and become  
To it all as a fool, or as one struck dumb?"



But I hurl'd the pedigree into the flames —  
That vellum inscribed with a thousand names —  
And watch'd it frizzle and watch'd it burn;  
And then, with a strong of the shoulders, turn'd  
To the easel whereon it stood, and thought —  
Of the time it took, of the brains it bought —

And my pride <sup>was lost</sup> ~~for ever~~, as I <sup>weigh'd</sup> ~~thought~~ of the life  
Of the old gray man who had left his all  
To me (whom he loved for the sake of his wife)  
To wipe off the mortgage and hold the Hall.  
And so I let pride and pedigree fight for the bone,\*  
And have left, forever, my name and my line alone.

### Song — Jamie Frier o' Jlangarry

[For ninety years a shepherd — the oldest man  
in Scotland, b. 1800, d. 1910]

Jamie Frier o' Jlangarr is deid!  
Jamie Frier the auld shepherd is deid!  
A tender o' sheep a' his days he had been;  
An' he kenn'd auld men wha had seen  
The Prince o' a' Princes — Prince Charlie — (pronounced  
wham they lov'd an' a'werit sae deatly. <sup>Charlie</sup>  
Noo he's deid, is auld frier —  
Jamie Frier o' Jlangarry.

Jamie Frier was aw wyl'd by the weed, —  
Whan he liv'd he swore by the weed  
O' a' weeds — his frien o' a' friens —  
That he'd lov'd an' he'd puff'd sin his teens, —  
An' he liv'd tae a hunder an' ten  
To enjoy richt guid heal' tae the en',  
Did auld Jamie Frier —  
Jamie Frier o' Jlangarry.

\* The "bone of the contention" — a solely unprofitable  
business — as to who now represents the ancient family.



## Chorus

Let's drink to the memory o' auld Jamie Frier,  
Wha was wacht a wee drap at the en' o' the week!  
Let's hunt for the memory o' auld Jamie Frier,  
Wha was use up twa uncies o' baccie a week!  
Let's drink to the memory o' auld Jamie Frier,  
Wha could read for his Buik \* an' write a fair haun -  
The brawest auld fellow 'at iver ~~was~~ born!  
Jamie Frier! Jamie Frier!  
Jamie Frier o' Glenfarr!

\* The Bible

See 1/10

## Vestigia Nulla Retrosuum

'Tis the stream that now whistles the spinning-wheel,  
Not the foot of the patient matron of yore,  
Who would sit and lay her hand to the spindle  
And tread and tread till the light would dwindle.  
Her day was long - will it come no more?

No more may we watch her thread the wool  
No more at dusk <sup>may we</sup> creep through <sup>her</sup> ~~the~~ cottage door  
<sup>To</sup> see her seated beside the spindle  
And tread and tread till the light would dwindle?  
She may spin in our dreams, but - on earth no more.

1/10

Things we want are long a-coming,  
Thoughts of them are ever drumming,  
Drumming in our head,  
Yet the hope just keeps no going -  
Better, surely, this than knowing  
Our desire is dead.

Published by The War  
in the Scottish Chronicle  
29.12.22

Reflection of a charming lady of temporarily  
unsound mind

It can never come again —  
On the neat side of our graves —  
The love I've lost on children,  
The love they've lost on me.  
As I move and think I fain  
Would dive beneath the waves  
And lose myself forever;  
For I've lost the love for children,  
And they've lost their love for me.

It was all I lived for once —  
When I'd young ones of my own —  
The love of lively children  
And to bring their love to me.  
Now I must take the consequence  
And so there I'm unknown —  
Yes, lose myself forever;  
For I've lost the love for children,  
And they've lost their love for me!

Hallow e'en

1910  
Craigville; Blackhall.

Of a Bacchanalian

She passed from the mansion to garret  
Where her soul from her body did flee —  
She had sailed in the red sea of claret,  
And her <sup>body</sup> ~~soul~~ was drowned in that sea.  
The vine buds more mischievous than clusters,  
And there come from it more faults than grapes:  
It was death to the bold fillibusters  
Who drank themselves baser than apes;  
It was death to that woman of pleasure  
Who, roused by the strength of the wine,  
Gave vent to her lust in full measure —  
And stained a fair line.

(Published in  
The Feather Chronicle)



# A Study in Bay

Come, I'll show you a pony, the best in my stable -  
The hunter in miniature heard of in fable -  
That none can out rival, or chestnut or sable,  
Or brown or a bay, or roan or a gray -  
Such a pony you'll see in my stable to-day.

What quarters to boast of, what arms, what a thigh!  
And hocks near the ground and a head set on high,  
With a heart for the game that'll never say die,  
Here this study before me in brightest of bay,  
Which you'll never forget when you've seen her today.

Her muzzle is as red as a pork polony,  
Her ears as quick as the ears of a coney;  
And that is the truth of my polo pony -

Not a chestnut or sable or brown or a gray,  
But a study before me in brightest of bay!

She can change all her feet in a trot or a canter  
On limbs quite as lithe as the limbs of a panther,  
And in galloping lets not another supplant her -

This study before me in brightest of bay,  
Which you'll never forget when you've seen her today.

How she follows the ball in and out of the players!  
How easy to ride! - the best of conveyances -

The laziest of guides, and a <sup>Queen</sup> ~~king~~ amongst players -  
This study before me in brightest of bay,  
Without rival, whatever you say.

1912

## Joseph Pennell as a Platform Lecturer -

Pennell draws well; and when he chalks his part,  
He does it with the sweetest turn of art;  
But when he talks to us, there's none can be  
More cut at for talking in one time than he!

[For the above I adapted to my own feelings Herrick's four lines re "Comely, a good speaker but an ill singer" - "Comely acts well; and when he speaks his part, He talks it with the sweetest tones of Art. But when he sings a psalm, there's none can be more cut at for singing out of tune than he."]

~~a monotonous~~ Yankee gallop



— (To A friend in need of a  
good mount!)  
Bonnington — A 4-yr. old.

7 Sired by a hackney — (the sire of three queens),  
Foal of a mare of the Water breed;  
Petted and fed by a girl in her teens; \*  
School'd in the ways of a sportsman's creed —  
This is the pony for you in your need.

All's well that ends well on straw and on sward:  
Time was when I found some Australian tricks —  
Tricks of the race of a station abroad,  
Bucking and sidling and fore and aft kicks; —  
I soon knock'd 'em out with the aid of my sticks.

Lifted with spirit — the pluck of his dam;  
Made of the London and bone of his sire;  
Playful as kitten and kind as a lamb,  
Good-looking withal — what more o'ye require?  
Tell me at once that I have you a buyer.

Putting through bridle as straight as an arrow,  
Six mile an hour he can amble and walk,  
Passing the traffic as cool as a sparrow;  
Pricks up his ears whenever I talk —  
(Talk to 'em always, no matter what talk).

Take him on grass; — now here he excels,  
You feel there is power from saddle to hoof,  
And his bellows don't suffer — the pacer never tells.  
The eating of pudding is sure the best proof,  
So fill up your stall, and send me the oof.

14. ix. 18

Loanhead House.

Kirkcaldy

Linlithgowshire.

\* — Miss Buchan, daughter of the tenant farmer of  
Bonnington, West Lothian. She won the Eglinton Hunt  
Cup at Bogside with "Castle Rock", ridden by Mr Blair,  
April 1920. Miss Buchan was certainly not more than 21 when  
she won this Cup.



# Resigning The Pink

Words put into the mouth of a gallant-  
old sportsman, once a regular follower  
of the ... .. Foxhounds

Aye, lang I've follow'd here my fond desire -  
Lang, lang I've lov'd to d-huntin',  
An' lov'd to ride the horse at a dancier  
An' sport wi' naethin' dauntin'.

Hoo after hae I donn'd the pink an' white,  
An' even as <sup>gayly</sup> merrily;  
Hoo after hae I seen the pleasin' <sup>sight</sup> ~~sight~~  
O' the L. an' S. hunds fleetin'.

When harkin' back I'm fu' o' nae remorse,  
My youth was gien for courtin',  
The ~~pleasures~~ <sup>pleasures</sup> o' the <sup>chase</sup> ~~field~~, o' huntin' an' house,  
An' a' the ~~rest~~ <sup>flair</sup> 'at's sportin'.

Noo, age an' the pink resign to youth -  
The link maun shortly sever;  
But while I've life an' memory left, forsooth  
I'll hunt in theack - for ever.

21. x. 11  
Craigville.  
Blackhall  
Midlothian

If a divorcee lair about to marry again  
she now looks free from pain,  
The lovely Jane,  
That once again  
Picks up her winning skin.

I'm a' an' whistlin'  
I mind ~~nothin'~~ burns in spate.  
The deep an' divilish ditches,  
An' whiles a fa' - to stang my happy state  
Represent the turnfu' bitches.  
The deep an' divilish ditches,  
An' whiles a fa' - to stang my happy state  
Represent the turnfu' bitches.  
The deep an' divilish ditches,  
An' whiles a fa' - to stang my happy state  
Represent the turnfu' bitches.

I've joined in the harum-scarum tide -  
The up and down wind scamble -  
An' hizzled through the fences well astride  
Aboon the strappin' bramble  
Young maiden's cock o' whup an' rids, s' clear ca's  
The swing ~~gates~~ <sup>gates</sup>, an' heftly whunstane wa's  
(at melle brought us troubles)  
The lang straight ~~lines~~ <sup>lines</sup> an'?



## The End of A Bolter

It was a glorious morn for a gallop on a son  
of old "Isinglass"  
just enough of the wind 'to cool us and a spring  
in the winter grass.

The mare Jack rode was by "Hackler", one in  
a hundred mares  
with the speed of a "Flying Childers", and the best  
of the best of stayers (!).

Cast off from the flat by her owner - no jockey  
could sit on her back -

She was sent to a 'chasing stable', and there  
she was put 'on the rack' -

They rode her knee-deep on the sand-hills two  
hours at a stretch every day,

Till she tired and sweated and lathered and  
was rid (?) of her evil play.

Then they tried her over the fences and showed her  
the open ditch.

She became such a 'magical lepper' <sup>that</sup> they called her "The  
Westmorland Witch".

And this was the mare at my elbow they match'd  
with me on "The Squire".

A ~~spinning~~ <sup>spinning</sup> ~~well known~~ well known at Rugby, a hunter  
a game one, a flier.

The course was a long one, a stiff one for me  
and my worthy friend,  
who had been taken in by a 'dealer' - and then by  
a mare in the end!

Of the jumps the last to contend with was a wall  
<sup>fully</sup> ~~a good~~ five feet high  
with a cope on the top twenty inches, and a drop  
that would make you sigh!



As we near'd it "The Squire" lugg'd the ribbon - / could  
only just keep him in hand  
But he knew when to measure his distance and judge  
how to take off and land.  
So he went at the wall before him to soar in the  
air above  
And held up his docks behind him in a way to land  
~~in the way~~ we love -  
Without ever a flick or a blunder, but gathering  
force for his stride  
In the fashion of true hurdle-racing; and we finish'd  
first in the ride.  
When were they in the race? - They finish'd far back  
without sniffing the stake:  
"The Westland witer" shared the magic of Hell, and  
for Jack's own sake  
It were better they'd never been mated. only rid  
for a time of her vice - ~~the~~  
Her bucking & bolting - 'twas fated she'd once more  
be off in a trice, ~~which~~  
Which she proved. Running out at the "double",  
Lead long in her mad career  
She flew through the park to the water, and buried  
her nose in the ~~water~~ <sup>willow</sup>!

Now, a man may be cured of malice - a dealer  
of daring and cunning;  
But a horse of his worse fault - never - when  
a bolter is in the running.

Impr. file 29.X.12

The year was 1812, the day was 29th  
The year was 1812, the day was 29th  
The year was 1812, the day was 29th  
The year was 1812, the day was 29th

## The First Touch of Winter

O blast, that my blood doth reenter,  
Thou chill'st me from head to the toes!  
How I dread the return of the winter  
And Bronchitis - the worst of my foes!  
The winds from the North sea are steady,  
The martins and swallows have gone,  
And I feel I'm ready, quite ready,  
To follow them on.

18<sup>th</sup> 1913

The above lines inspired by a passage in a letter from my dear old father (in his 80<sup>th</sup> year), written from Allaubank, Fossesme:-  
"Cold N.E. winds each day, or otherwise the weather is lovely. Swallows and martins have cleared off, and I fear I shall have to follow their example before long, for I dread another winter of Bronchitis and chilblains."

To Walter Crane Esq, RWS, etc.

Two 'C's and a 'G' \*  
were the artists for me  
In my picture-book, childish day.  
Each 'C' was a he,  
The 'G' was a she  
Now each but a 'C' 's run away.

26.7.12

It's well there are still a few smiling faces,  
It's well for the world it is so  
The miserable men in the miserable places  
Will say so, I know.

24.2.20

\* Walter Crane, Randolph Caldecott and Kate Greenaway. The last of the famous trio to die was Walter Crane, who died 14 March 1915.



Impromptu — Of a runaway hunteress

You might as well follow a common fly —  
Follow its flight in the air  
Or try to give Johnson\* another black eye,  
As sticks to the heels of that mare!

17. 9. 12

\* Jack Johnson, the coloured boxer,  
has already two black eyes.

Recalling Mar, Queen of Scots

And in that ancient, plaintive Scottish ditty,  
Though we be lowly people, poor and mean,  
We read again with silent, reverent pity,  
"How sore a thing it was to be a Queen".

21. 1. 18

Sandown

Best of horses, best of horses,  
You will see at Sandown;  
Best of course, man, best of courses  
You will see at Sandown;  
Come, then, with your best of forces  
For to run at Sandown.

Ask not why I say so —  
Look yourself at Sandown;  
You'll not cry out nay, so  
Well you'll think of Sandown.

1910

Impromptu To Isabel

You've smoked me like a kipper in my bed,  
Then brought me down to freeze;  
You've dried up all the notions in my head,  
And here I sit and sneeze!

April Fool's Day 1922

The kitchen fire wouldn't draw and  
the wood-smoke penetrated & filled my bedroom above,  
and there was no fire lit in our sitting room —  
on a particularly cold morning too, and windows  
all wide open.

Impromptu - on a postcard, or the printing of a book

To C. E. G., a Printer and Publisher

Tastes of a' folk differ,

Noo-a-days - mais an' mais :  
Yours be licht an' oblong,  
mine be mirk an' square.

3. 12. 10

Not a clo's-horse

To Isabel

I'm not a clo's-horse, Isabel! -  
No joke, I wren, to meet your laughter! -  
I like my things dried very well  
Before they're on - not after!

I'm now, thank god, as sound 's a bell,  
While this damp shirt is round me airting;  
But soon may be in heaven or hell -  
And you on earth despairing!

1910  
Craigville  
Blackhall

Scotland's Two Oldest Fitz-marks

Lord Rosebery boasts a welter weight, "The  
Friendly" hand-in-hand -  
"Dro Inwantz" (-number ten) - the oldest in  
the land.

And A. B. Dawson claims the next in  
order of the age -  
A number seventeen Policy, which here  
adorns my page.

1911



To James L. Ogil Robertson Esq ("Hugh Halibuton"),  
together <sup>with</sup> a sumptuous 16 page prospectus <sup>\*</sup> of An Artist's  
Thoughts in Verse and Design

Here with the songs of this impoverished bird;  
And pardon, pray, an uncontrolled persistence  
Should I once more your kindly notice crave.  
Just now I'm trying to stem "the engulfing wave" —  
To use a somewhat over-hackney'd word,  
I'm making one more "bid" for my existence.  
This time I'd have you swell this welcome list  
Of those that know my mill falls short of grist; —  
By helping to a book the songs they've heard,  
They hope to check a premature desistance.  
So please; say "yes"; and cheer a Craigie bird.

17.3.16

Old Farmhouse (on the Craigie Hall estate)  
(Camond Bridge).

Impromptu —  
Farewell to Nicotine!

I cannot smoke as I wa. wont to do,  
Brooks is my pipe and Brooks my "bellows" too.  
This half-fill'd pouch, I'll give it unto you —  
And now, my fondest souvenir, adieu!

1911

Re the Oak-leaf in my picture of  
Sam Morgan with his L. and S. Mount.

And this I wished, and this I sought to do, —  
Such was no fond illusion of my heart:  
I felt that I could draw its form so true  
As to show "the soul of truth in every part."

14.9.14  
(the day I finished the picture)

\* This was the prospectus for the book which never  
appeared <sup>in that form</sup> as all the blocks, 100 in all, were burnt  
in a disastrous fire. But the prospectus, 100 in all, were burnt.

and yet I don't  
regret that this was  
a long "farewell"  
to my pipe and  
my pouch. I don't  
regret that I  
gave them to you.  
1911

as appears  
in the  
prospectus  
of the book  
which never  
appeared



## Two Interesting Wires \*

Commander Peary's wire to his wife from South  
Harpwell, Maine, 6<sup>th</sup> Sept. 1909; per Reuter:—

Have made all good at last,  
and in my grasp, my love,  
I have the old Pole fast.  
Will wire again to prove  
That Cook's not owner of the Pole.

Best

Mrs Peary's wire to her husband:—

All well. Best love. God bless  
you, dear, and hurry home  
To clear us from the mess  
Caused by a young Cook's team  
Up North — a long way from the Pole.

Kate

## The Rival Explorers

It appear'd Doctor Cook cook'd the goose of a Peary;  
But (in spite of the faith in this Cook by his name)  
When Peary appears on a sudden to claim  
The North Pole as his own; things look very queer — eh

7.9.09



[Cook said  
he'd dis-  
covered the  
Pole. It  
proved to  
be an im-  
possible  
plot.]

\* The words underlined here are the  
exact reading of the two wires. I have  
added the rest so as to convey what  
they would have said <sup>besides</sup> and what proved  
to be quite true. The accounts in the  
papers at the time were very conflicting.

In February 1920 the great American  
explorer, Rear-Admiral R.E. Peary, died of  
pronounced anaemia. He had had 35 trans-  
fusions of blood during the past 2 years. It  
was <sup>on</sup> April 6, 1909, that he made the grand  
discovery of the North Pole.



(Concerning a Collector of "Forms for the People")

Is it true a man can keep twelve shelves of books —  
And most of these Scotch poems —  
And swear by Robert Ferguson of old,  
And come so far below him's  
To walk outside a waiting-room in cold  
Approaching that of zero's  
Because the crew within's beneath his looks —  
As proud as any Nero's?

26.1.10

Lines strung up in  
Prince's Street Station  
during about 14 degrees  
of frost.

Concerning a proposal to raise a memorial to  
Robert Ferguson, the poet, in the shape of a Home  
for cases of temporary mental derangement. (The  
author of it, a minister of religion, says, "I should be  
glad to contribute my mite to such a humane memorial  
scheme.")

A Home for Melancholia  
ye'd raise to him! yet fool, yet!  
What, keeps alive his madness,  
Recalling all the badness —  
His drinking days, and folly  
With Mary, Jean and Tolly?

Oh! spend yer "mite" on brains, Sir,  
And see ye take some pains, Sir,  
To feel a greater gladness  
Than <sup>poring</sup> ~~pondering~~ o'er the badness  
Of all his misspent years —  
So, drown his death in brandy —  
Leave him the shade he wears.

7.2.20

Published in  
The Scottish Chronicle  
15th Feb 1910

1920

Cromwell Kick'd out the bishop,  
And Charles Kick'd out the man  
That still prefer'd to dish-up  
The fragments from the pan  
Of Puritans and Roundheads.  
But we prefer this done:—  
We want a few more sound heads  
To make the churches one.

Published in  
The Kebleton Chronicle  
24. Nov. 1922

16.2.20

[On Sunday 15 Feb 1920, several thousand  
people assembled in Durham Cathedral to  
hear Dr Jowett, the nonconformist, preach.  
The Vicar of Wheatley Hill, as Dr Jowett  
entered the pulpit, got up and protested  
in the name of Uniformity, but was promptly  
removed by four policemen to the music  
of that beautiful <sup>hymn</sup> "When I survey the wondrous  
cross".]

Ex Tempore

<sup>dreamt</sup>  
I ~~dreamt~~ that I stood in front of a drain,  
That the high rocks ran with increasing rain  
And the sky was full of a curling worm;  
And I woke — just feeling a bit out of form!

22.12.13

The blind love of a father

He was blind to the rest  
and mine was "the best".

1913  
At the RSA



## Work Disperses Sorrow

The busy worker <sup>hath</sup> ~~has~~ no time for sorrow,  
With work his love and time his meal:  
He looketh not behind, nor into the morrow,  
And sorrow's crushed beneath his feet.

31. 3. 16

Impromptu — and no more!

<sup>Ysa,</sup>  
~~And~~ all the wraiths of this world of wail,  
Were it his, would never send him to the Devil —  
He is there already! — he got there without it —  
You can ask Mrs Dash if you doubt it —  
And that's all about it —!

1910

## A Parson's painter's pet subjects

The blue, blue mountains and the green, green sea,  
The bit of salmon and that well-known tree,  
The King and Queen and the bumble-bee,  
And the "Oh! please, leave your peace with me."

23. 8. 10

In Charlotte Square  
Edinburgh

Grief is flouting with the child:  
Sights of sorrow, tears wild,  
Touch a heart soon reconciled.

8. 3. 15

"Remembering all, forgiving all" —  
I don't know where I've seen or heard it;  
But this I know the singer knew  
What the feeling is and how to work it.

16. 3. 21

Published in  
The Scottish Chronicle  
24th Nov 1912

## Presence better Than Present

(She) "By all the stars, and by the Holy Present!  
No gift can I give you this May."

(He) "Your presence better far than any present—  
you can give me on this day."

13.5.16  
(Re my wife and self on my  
birthday)

To C.I.F.

After Hearing of Her Engagement

"I do not know if we can be  
Again as we have been, —  
a gulf doth run between:

We cannot meet as once we did; —  
My fondness then was deep,  
In daytime and in sleep.

The kiss thou gav'st me twice each day —  
For me my look'd for share —  
Was wholly thine to spare;

I do not know but what I'm right: —  
The kiss — if kiss it be —  
Is now for him, not me.

"It will not wrong thy present joy  
With bygone days to wend,  
and kindness to the end;

But love henceforth's a different love  
Betwixt thyself and me:  
As once, it cannot be.

I love thee still for loving him,  
and love the more 'twere mine.  
— God speed to thee and thine.

19.8.16  
Cramond Bridge



## To Isabel

No tear must you shed for me living or dead,  
But remember the words I often have said:—  
When the lid of my coffin is seal'd,  
Wreath it with flowers that grow in the field;  
No ghastly black-plum'd hearse for me,  
In broad daylight for all to see!  
But in some country wain, and drawn  
By one good horse at break of dawn,  
Thus let my lifeless body be.  
And if ever you visit my grave by day,  
These are the words I'd have you say:—  
Nothing he loved but what was fair;  
Nature and Art was his chiefest care.

22.6.15  
Old Farmhouse  
Cramond Bridge



(published in  
The Scotch Chronicle)  
1923

## A Rebus, or a suggestion for my own gravestone

Close me down, close me down with a slane,  
And leave me to rot, forgotten or not,  
Till nothing be left but the bone.

And grave on the tombstone a gaff,  
With the date of my dawn, and when home I was borne,  
And that God was my guide and my staff.

1910  
Craigville  
Blackhall  
Midlothian.



My initials being GAF, I have chosen  
"gaff" as a rebus for my name, the  
surname was spelt with two little 'f's—  
Hollisgill, thus "gaff" is a good rebus  
for me, not only in sound but in spelling.



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**The Glasgow Herald.**  
(Established 1783)

Glasgow

Notice appeared in the "Glasg

20. 2. 1920

**VERSE AND DESIGN**

"An Artist's Thoughts in Verse and Design."  
By George A. Fothergill, M.B.C.M. (Edin-  
burgh: Constable.)

"The Poems and Paintings of the Lady Diana  
Bridgeman." 10s 6d. (London: Erskine  
Macdonald.)

Dr Fothergill's handsome volume makes pictorial rather than literary appeal. The author is a fluent versifier, and his wide range of subject suggests a versatile fancy. He is less satisfactory in sentimental mood, where the cliché is too obvious; better when his muse inspires him to write of horses and sport; and at his best when he employs it to ironical purpose. "The Day's Work of a Poet" is admirable, and while there is sting in it, it is not waspish. One imagines that the doctor is a facile rhymist, and would prove a rather deadly opponent in a "Limerick" competition. His impromptus invariably have point. His artistry deserves less qualified praise. He has obviously the gift of design, and his "Initials" suggest a copious imagination, as well as a sense of line and occasionally of humour. Among his more spacious efforts are to be noted a pleasant drawing of "Craigie Hall" and a variation of St George and the Dragon, the dragon in this case being of course the ex-haister.

One hesitates to apply the term precocious to the verse and paintings of Lady Diana Bridgeman. It is too intimately related to prodigy, which, besides being a clumsy word, is rather suggestive of forced talent, a sort of clever immaturity. On the contrary, these verses and pictures appeal by their naturalness. The productions of a child between the ages of eight and twelve years, they are of course remarkable, but their charm derives from the simple sincerity of their expression. Lady Diana is obviously a gifted child, of vivid imagination, and with exceptional powers of observation. But, whether she draws or rhymes, she is always unaffected, and reveals the simple outlook which naturally belongs to the child of eight or twelve. The Rackham books have possibly penetrated into her nursery, but she has also dreamed pictorially, and in colour and line gives her dreams dainty form. She has also, doubtless, read fairy tales, but the bright and bonnie face which shines in the frontispiece suggests that she has also a fairyland of her own. Her poetic themes are simple and her verse clever, without betraying any straining after cleverness.

Beautifully printed for the author by Messrs Constable, Edinburgh, Mr George A. Fothergill's work, *An Artist's Thoughts in Verse and Design*, appears in two editions (£1, 1s. and edition de luxe £2, 2s.) The poems that make up the letterpress are charming lyrical pieces, short, graceful, and tuneful, that descant upon the beauties of fields and flowers, or make a loyal patriotic song, or celebrate artists, poets, and famous writers, or set out a jest in lightly-going rhymes; while some give voice to the joys of the hunting field, and a few reflect some odd impressions of a soldier who has been through the war. The graphic art of the book no less accomplished and convincing, displays itself for the most part in fine designs for initial letters, but is seen also in other fanciful decorative features in drawings of flowers and birds and in a delightfully airy and soft-toned etching of Craigie Hall. The work should appeal intimately to readers and observers who can feel the spell of the country scenes near Edinburgh.

The Scotsman

12. 2. 20

I only sent two copies  
to the Press and  
these are the reviews of  
my first book of Verse.

Those whom I had most to do with  
at Messrs T. & A. Constable's Printing  
House over the set-up of this book  
were Mr Walter Bissat Blair, L.L.D.;  
Mr John Falloway, foreman compositor;  
Mr Robert C. Moore, chief press-reader;  
Mr Croup, the manager; and Mr John  
Swan Campbell machine over-see, who  
presided with patriarchal pomp at  
his workstation in the large lower room  
in Thistle Street. It was a pleasure to be with such







Give Truth for Truth	app. p. 46	Of Warwickshire Lads	app. p. 65
Trust No Weather	app. p. 46	John Peel's Horn	app. p. 65
To the Rev. A. G. —	app. p. 46	The Smallest Man but the greatest M.F.H.	app. p. 66
Betsy and the Bobby	app. p. 47	A Sastark	app. p. 67
"Now the day is over"	app. p. 47	The Lions at Bradbourne Hall	app. p. 67
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The Rosslyn Knight	app. p. 49	A Queen of Domesticity	app. p. 70
Ah, poor Mrs C — !	app. p. 50	What to do with the Kaiser	app. p. 71
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I like your little pince-nez	app. p. 50	Britain's Science	app. p. 73
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Militer's Tenure of old	app. p. 55	My old Nursery	app. p. 80
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